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'Our efforts are paying off'

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One for the album: Najib, flanked by Prasarana chairman Tan Sri Ismail Adam (on his right) and Prasarana president and group chief executive officer Datuk Seri Azmi Abdul Aziz, posing for a selfie with the staff after a dialogue session in Kuala Lumpur.

PM: Move to improve public transport generating huge economic returns

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PETALING JAYA: Efforts to improve public transportation are yielding huge economic dividends to the country, said the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the economic returns generated by Prasarana Malaysia Berhad in terms of time and expenses saved by passengers as well as easing traffic congestion amounted to RM13.3bil in 2016.

This year, the amount was expected to increase to RM17bil, Najib said at a gathering yesterday with 2,600 Prasarana staff members.

Prasarana, a government-owned company, is the asset owner and operator of various multi-modal transport networks in the country.

Najib said the economic value being generated by the improved public transport, including the LRT and MRT, was derived from a 21% public transport modal share.


A modal share is the percentage of travellers using public transport.

"The economic returns when the modal share is increased to 40% by 2030 will be much higher," he said.

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Najib also paid tribute to Prasarana's 10,000 workers for their contributions.

He said that when he took over as Prime Minister, he directed the Government to improve public transport based on four key factors – improving efficiency, reliability, affordability and customer friendliness.

"We had to revamp public transport because at that time, there was too much obsession with Proton and the national car.

"It created problems because the Government eventually had to step in and help rescue Proton. However, that is in the past and we are now talking about the present and future.

"Anyway the person who represents the past, let him be in the past, not in the present," he added.

In jest, Najib urged Prasarana to ensure zero defect in all its projects because as Prime Minister, he said he often got blamed for things that went wrong.

"When fuel prices go up, they said it was the fault of the Prime Minister, but when prices go down I don't get any praise," Najib said.

The Prime Minister later held a dialogue with participants of the gathering.

Among the questions he responded to was what he did in his free time.

Najib said it was important for him to achieve work-life balance.

"It is also very, very important to manage stress.

"The most stressful job in the world is to be Prime Minister, I can assure you.

"So you need to be able to manage stress, and if you succeed, God willing you'll be all right," said Najib.