

# PM mulls Johor land buyback

## Govt will try to reclaim property before purchase

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government will try to reclaim before mulling to buy the land, purportedly in the name of Sultan of Johor, for the Rapid Transit System (RTS) project, says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"We have agreed to take about six months to consider RTS again or decide on other alternative plans.

"First, we will reclaim the land. If there are parties which have taken the land, they must follow the existing process.

"We have not received a full report, only rumours that the land has been taken by Sultan of Johor. About the payment, we do not know," the Prime Minister told reporters after a Pakatan Harapan presidential council meeting at Yayasan Al-Bukhary here yesterday.

He was commenting on reports in various portals, which quoted sources, alleging that a plot of land

in Bukit Chagar which the Federal Government was supposed to own is now in the name of Johor Ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar.

According to the reports, the 4.5ha plot was one of five lots in Bukit Chagar that Putrajaya received from the Johor government in 2012 as part of a land swap deal to build the Johor Baru Customs, Immigration and Quarantine Complex.

The portals also reported sources as, stating that the land was transferred under the previous Barisan Nasional administration sometime between 2017 and last year.

It further stated that due to this, Putrajaya would have to fork out around RM495mil in compensation to acquire the land.

When asked if the government would buy back the land, Dr Mahathir did not rule that out.

"If he has paid, we have to buy back. But if he hasn't, we won't. It is our land.



Light moment: Dr Mahathir with Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail (seated, right), PKR president Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Pakatan Harapan senior leaders during the press conference at Yayasan Albukhary in Kuala Lumpur.

"We have to make our claim that the land is ours," he added.

The RTS project, signed in 2018, was scheduled for construction this year and expected to be completed by December 2024.

It covers 4km between Bukit Chagar, Johor Baru and Woodlands, Singapore, with the capacity to

ferry 10,000 passengers an hour.

The project will run above ground in Johor and on a 25m-high bridge across the straits before going underground to Woodlands North.

Earlier, it was speculated that the RTS project might be shelved indefinitely after Malaysia requested for a six-month deadline extension.