

New transport hub dubbed 'gateway' to East Coast

> Facility represents federal-state teamwork and private-sector partnership: PM

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GOMBAK: The newly opened Terminal Bersepadu Gombak (TBG) is being billed as the Klang Valley's "gateway" to the East Coast, a long-delayed project now poised to do for Gombak what Terminal Bersepadu Selatan did for Bandar Tasik Selatan.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who launched the RM307.4 million hub today, said the facility is more than just bricks and mortar as it also represents federal-state teamwork and private-sector partnership.

However, he warned that its success hinges on Malaysians.

"With facilities this beautiful and first-class in quality, what is important now is our culture. If

rubbish is still thrown here and there, it undermines everything. When we build something this big, it cannot become another monument. It must serve the people and it must reflect our values, namely cleanliness, order and pride in our shared spaces."

He also flagged the terminal's location next to the upcoming East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) station as a catalyst for growth in Kelantan, Pahang and beyond.

"Integrated hubs such as this must go beyond transport. They should provide access to markets, housing, health, education and even government services," he said.

Anwar said unlike some countries that charge private vehicles to enter city centres, Malaysia is not headed down that road, at least not yet.

"Our public transport infrastructure is still being developed and we do not want to burden the people," he said.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said TBG was designed as a 24-hour integrated hub with 36 bus bays, more than 1,000 parking spaces, food courts, retail outlets, prayer rooms, waiting areas and direct walkalator access to the ECRL station.

Once fully operational, the terminal is expected to handle tens of thousands of passengers daily, but for now, express bus operators have not been compelled to relocate their East Coast routes.

He said the shift would be gradual to avoid teething problems.

Developed under the build-lease-maintain-operate-transfer model, TBG would be managed by concessionaire Tegas for 25 years before being handed back to the government.

"We want this terminal to be more than a transport facility. It must be a vibrant hub, with safety, cleanliness, customer service and proper maintenance as top priorities," said Loke.

He added that surrounding commercial and residential projects' would complement the terminal, consistent with the government's Transit-Oriented Development strategy.

He also suggested bringing back the Urban Transformation Centre concept, with Immigration, NRD and RTD counters right inside the terminal, to boost convenience for the public.

"Imagine being able to renew your passport or MyKad with direct LRT access, without parking hassles," he said, noting that Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail has already agreed in principle.

Delayed for nearly a decade, the project is finally ready for passengers. With its strategic position as the East Coast's front door to the Klang Valley, TBG is expected to sharpen connectivity between the nation's western and eastern corridors while fuelling regional economic growth.



Anwar (right) and Loke at an event showcasing the facilities available at the Gombak Integrated Terminal.

- ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN