

**Malaysia-Singapore RTS gets the green light**  
**TheStarOnline**  
**February 19, 2013**  
**By NELSON BENJAMIN**

SINGAPORE: Malaysia and Singapore have agreed to go ahead with the Rapid Transit System (RTS) linking Johor Baru with the republic.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman said both countries had a year to draft the plans on the preferred option for the RTS.

He added that under phase one, the alignment and station scheme options would be identified.

"Once this is decided, we can move to phase two," Anifah said during a briefing on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's two-day working visit to Singapore which began yesterday.

It is learnt that among the options being considered is a bridge or an underground tunnel link.

Singapore had earlier announced that its Thomson mass rapid transit (MRT) line would be opened in stages from 2019.

The 30km line will run through the north-south corridor of the island republic, starting in Woodlands, the area closest to Johor Baru via the Causeway, and passing through industrial, residential and shopping districts before ending at Marina Bay.

The S\$18bil (RM44bil) line will be completely underground and is expected to serve 400,000 commuters daily.

Anifah said leaders from both countries were expected to discuss the progress and implementation of the Points of Agreement.

"Both leaders will also travel to Iskandar Malaysia in Johor to launch the ground-breaking ceremony of the Urban and Resort Wellness project.

He added that it involved a 2ha "Urban Wellness" project in Medini North and a 84ha "Resort Wellness" in Medini Central.

Other issues to be discussed include cooperation in aviation and airport services between Senai and Changi airports as well as the establishment of ferry and water taxi services between Puteri Harbour in Iskandar and Tuas in Singapore.

Anifah added that there was steady progress in the implementation of initiatives under the Joint Ministerial Committee for Iskandar Malaysia including in transport, immigration, tourism, environment and industrial cooperation.

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