

**MRT Project Gives Recognition To Capability Of Local Companies - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 30 (Bernama) -- The MRT (mass rapid transit) project has opened a new chapter in giving recognition to the capabilities of the local companies and Malaysians, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said thousands of job opportunities had been created through the project including at the professional level besides attracting many Malaysian nationals working abroad to return home.

"The capability and capacity brought back to Malaysia augurs well for our country. It is capable of generating the economy with a reduction in the outflow of funds and even more important, it raises the Malaysian economic position in the value chain," he said.

He disclosed this at the launching of the variable density tunnel boring machine (TBM).

Najib said the MRT project was another meaningful achievement in the country's progress not only in making significant changes in the public transport system but also contributing toward the aspiration to transform Malaysia into a high-income nation.

The Prime Minister said what was more encouraging was that the TBM launched had proven the capability of local companies in generating ideas that could change a particular industry.

The TBM was the outcome of a collaboration between a local company involving the MRT contractor, MMC Gamuda KVMRT Tunneling Sdn Bhd and a giant construction company from Germany, Herrenknecht.

He said this success was a good example where Malaysia became the forerunner in a very specialised field, that is, tunnel construction, another industry that is seen to continue to grow in the future.

"If Malaysia continues to develop capacity in this field, it is possible that Malaysia could one day emerge as a forerunner in the very competitive high technology industry at the global level," he said.

Meanwhile, Najib recorded his gratitude for the trust given by the people who continued to give the mandate to the Barisan Nasional to again helm the country.

With the mandate given, Najib said he would ensure that all initiatives that had been launched would be continued to achieve the target set.

These included the initiative under the economic transformation programme (ETP) and the MRT project which would be continued actively to provide a better public transport system particularly for the city dwellers.

"I am confident that the MRT project will be completed according to schedule and will provide service to the people by the end of 2016," he said at the function which was also attended by the Chief Secretary to the Government, Datuk Seri Dr Ali Hamsa, MRT Corp chief executive officer, Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid, and Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) Chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar.

The launch of what is billed as the world's first variable density TBM today marked the commencement of tunnelling activity beneath Kuala Lumpur for the Sungai Buloh-Kajang MRT Line.

The MRT underground line would run 9.5 kilometres.

Ten TBMs would be used for the project, six of them being variable density TBMs specially designed for tunnelling through Kuala Lumpur's limestone formation.

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