

Accepting State Government Grant Will Worsen Prasarana's Financial Position, Says Group Managing Director
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GEORGE TOWN, Oct 13 (Bernama) -- Public transport operator Syarikat Prasarana Negara Bhd (Prasarana) today said accepting a RM10-million annual grant from the state government to provide free public bus services would worsen its financial position.

Group managing director Datuk Shahril Mokhtar said Prasarana had an open book discussion with the state government officials and had highlighted that the company would lose much more if free rides were offered during peak hours despite the grant from the state government.

He was responding to a media statement issued by Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng that Prasarana could reduce its RM763-million losses in 2011 by accepting the RM10-million annual grant offered by the state government to provide free rides for seven peak hours.

"Lim should not manipulate this matter. We had an open discussion with the state government officials and are still awaiting the response from them," Shahril said in a media statement here Sunday.

He also said that the grant offered by the state government was less than the revenue generated by Rapid Penang.

Shahril said Prasarana was opened for discussion with the state government in the interest of enhancing the delivery of public transport services to Penangites.

"However, the state government must demonstrate its sincerity and earnestness in addressing the plight of the people as traffic congestion worsens in the state," he added.

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