

**Saudi Metro System Operation Another Milestone For Malaysia - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 14 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has described as another milestone for Malaysia the acquisition of a contract by Prasarana Malaysia Berhad for the operation and maintenance of the Arafah-Mina Metro system during the Haj season beginning this year.

The prime minister said it reflected the achievements of two Prasarana subsidiaries, namely Rapid Rail Sdn Bhd and Prasarana Bersepadu dan Perkhidmatan Kejuruteraan (Perdana), which spearheaded the bidding.

Malaysia, he said, was very proud and honoured to be working with the government of Saudi Arabia through this project, especially since the Haj pilgrimage was so close to the hearts of Muslims in Malaysia.

"I have full confidence in Prasarana in the implementation of this project because it has the expertise, knowledge and capability," said Najib, who is also the finance minister, in a statement Thursday.

Prasarana outbid several other major operators to be awarded the three-year contract by the Saudi Arabian Municipal and Rural Affairs Ministry.

The contract is to operate and maintain the Al Mashaaer Al Mugaddasah Metro Line, which forms part of the Makkah Metro, that operates specially during the Haj season.

Najib said it was the second international metro contract acquired by Prasarana in a period of six months.

In November last year, the company won an international bid to be the shadow operator for the first phase of the Makkah Metro, whereby it would be responsible for providing consultancy services for construction of the project.

Najib also said that Prasarana was eyeing several other projects, among them serving as shadow operator for the Jeddah Metro, operating and maintaining the metro system and monorail in Riyadh and operating and maintaining bus services in Saudi Arabia.

Prasarana is also eyeing the operation of the metro system in Madinah and Dammam as well as the project management of the Abuja Metro in Nigeria.

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