

Malaysia, Singapore Not Compromising On Border Security with HSR
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PUTRAJAYA, Dec 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia and Singapore will not compromise on border security aspects in relation to the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High-Speed Rail (HSR) project, said Malaysia's Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said Malaysia and Singapore had found ways to strike the right balance for being passenger friendly without compromising security for the HSR.

"We have found the proper solutions. There will be three common customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) facilities.

These will monitor movement of people.

"We believe it is a solution which is workable. It is passenger-friendly and at the same time does not compromise on the security aspects. I think we have found the right balance between the two," he said at a joint press conference with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong here today.

Earlier, Najib and Lee had held a four-eyed meeting and delegation meeting in conjunction of the 7th Malaysia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat.

Both leaders also witnessed the signing of a bilateral agreement between Malaysia and Singapore on the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore HSR in conjunction with the retreat.

The 350km rail line comprises eight stops in total, namely Bandar Malaysia, Putrajaya, Seremban, Ayer Keroh, Muar, Batu Pahat, Iskandar Puteri and Singapore. It will cut rail travel time between Kuala Lumpur and the city-state to 90 minutes as compared to three hours now.

Lee, meanwhile, said there was a need to make the Malaysia-Singapore border safe and secure.

"We have hundreds of thousands people crossing the border every day. It is the busiest international border in the world.

"There is no need to close down the Malaysia-Singapore border due to security problems. We need to manage the problem with close cooperation from agencies on both sides.

"We need this for the HSR and also the Rapid Transit System (RTS). We will make it work," he said.

Meanwhile, Najib said Malaysia and Singapore had agreed to work closely to ensure reliable and adequate water from the Johor River as provided for in the 1962 Water Agreement.

"Climate change has affected the water supply. However, the Johor River Barrage which will be fully

operational by March next year will ensure adequate water supply," he said.

He said Malaysia and Singapore also discussed on strengthening cooperation to counter terrorism in the region.

Najib said he also explained to Lee on the oppression of the Rohingya community in Myanmar and stressed that ASEAN must continue to a community of nations and believe in the core values that ASEAN must stand for.

Meanwhile, Lee said Singapore and Malaysia agreed to hold a triennial cultural showcase during the upcoming Malaysia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat as an effort to further boost ties between both countries.

Following the success of the Titian Budaya Cultural Festival in Kuala Lumpur last year, he said it would further improve cooperation on cultural matters.

"Our relationship must be more than economic and transactions, ultimately it is about friendship between the people and trust between leaders. Arts and culture play an important role," he said.

Lee also congratulated Malaysia on the installation of Sultan Muhammad V as the 15th Yang di-Pertuan Agong today.

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