

Mahathir era public transport systems went bust, says blogger
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Lim Sian See says four major public transport systems implemented in the 1990s had to be bailed out by government in a matter of a few years.

PETALING JAYA: A pro-government blogger has compared the achievement of Prime Minister Najib Razak in implementing public transport projects with those of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, saying all of the latter's initiatives went bankrupt.

Political blogger Lim Sian See took to Facebook yesterday to highlight the failures of the KL Monorail, Putra LRT, Star LRT and Intrakota bus service.

"All four major Kuala Lumpur public transportation projects under the Mahathir administration were given to private companies via concessions and then promptly went bankrupt.

"The government had to bail out all of them," Lim said, adding that government-owned Prasarana had to eventually take over all four public transport services, bailing out the respective companies which had failed in managing the services.

Lim highlighted how none of Najib's public transportation projects – LRT1 extension, LRT2 extension and MRT – were implemented with concession agreements and were fully in the hands of the government.

"There is no need for concession agreements that require periodic fees increases and the projects were also all delivered either on time and on budget or ahead of time and below budget."

Referring to the KL Monorail, Lim said it was a privatised project that was approved in a cabinet meeting in June 1989.

"Its cost was then estimated at RM143 million. When eventually completed and opened in 2003, it was said to have cost RM1.18 billion," said Lim.

"The company went bankrupt and was bailed out and taken over by Prasarana in 2007 for RM882 million," he said.

Similarly, he said both Putra LRT and Star LRT were bailed out in 2002 by Prasarana, with a total payment of up to RM9 billion.

Putra LRT had only been in service for four years before being bailed out, while Star LRT ran for six years under the private concessionaire.

“The Intrakota bus services that started operations in 1998 also went bankrupt and was bailed out and taken over by Prasarana in 2003 for RM177 million.”

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