

CONGESTION AT CAUSEWAY HAS EASED, THANKS TO MALAYSIA-SINGAPORE JOINT EFFORTS- SAYS PM ANWAR DATO' SERI ANWAR BIN IBRAHIM
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SINGAPORE, Oct 30 (Bernama) — The congestion at the Causeway connecting Johor Bahru and Singapore has eased following the collective effort made by relevant Malaysian ministries, Royal Malaysian Customs and their Singapore counterparts.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim thanked the ministries as well as Customs at the Malaysian side for facilitating the arrangements to reduce congestion, which he described as a huge problem for workers from Malaysia who have to wake up at 4am to cross the busiest international land border crossing in the world.

The Causeway sees more than 350,000 travellers daily.

Anwar said this in a joint press conference with his Singapore counterpart Lee Hsien Loong on Monday (Oct 30). Both Prime Ministers met in Singapore for the 10th Singapore-Malaysia Leaders' Retreat, the first since the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Singapore requires Woodlands (Woodlands Checkpoint (WCP)) which is presently under Malaysian authority.

“I said we can facilitate the sale (of WCP) so that Singapore can have the facility so Singapore can make the flow more easily for Malaysian workers to Singapore, and Singaporeans come into Johor particularly during weekends,” he said.

Meanwhile, Lee said at Singapore's end it has introduced various initiatives to make cross-border travel smoother and more efficient, while maintaining border security.

"We have also started to redevelop WCP to increase its capacity and meet the expected long-term growth in cross-border commuters.

"I am glad that PM Anwar welcomes and supports Singapore's efforts," he said.

According to a joint statement issued after the Retreat, the Immigration and Transportation Links Work Groups have worked closely to strengthen infrastructure and cross-border connectivity between Singapore and Johor.

Transport agencies from both countries also made progress in strengthening their transport links and improving commuters' experience, by increasing the frequency of cross-border bus services and introducing new ferry services, it said.

The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) projected that the traffic volume at WCP will have increased by close to 40 per cent by 2050. This means a daily average of about 400,000 travellers as compared to pre-pandemic levels of about 300,000 travellers in 2019.

In another related matter, both Anwar and Lee welcomed the good progress made in the ongoing construction of the Johor Bahru-Singapore Rapid Transit System (RTS) Link.

The RTS Link will connect Bukit Chagar in Johor Bahru, Malaysia and Woodlands North in Singapore with a peak capacity of 10,000 passengers per hour in each direction, which will help alleviate congestion along the

Causeway and further strengthen connectivity between Malaysia and Singapore.

Both Leaders expressed confidence in the commencement of the RTS Link service by the end of 2026 and looked forward to attending the ceremony in early 2024 to commemorate the historic completion of the drop-in span, which will connect both sides of the marine viaduct.

Both Leaders instructed their officials to continue working closely together to bring the RTS Link Project to fruition.

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