

PM wants impact study on bullet train

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KUALA LUMPUR: Not so fast.

The decision on whether YTL Corporation can go ahead and build its RM8 billion bullet train to Singapore will only be made after a national impact study by Khazanah Nasional.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the Government viewed the project positively but wanted to know whether it served the national interest.

Sources told the *New Straits Times* that the Government wanted to find out the impact a fast train to Singapore would have on other modes of transportation.

"For example, we need to know if air travel will be cannibalised and by how much. This has a direct impact on Malaysia Airlines. In the final analysis, the Government must know if the fast train will be in the interest of Malaysia and Malaysians," said a government official.

Tan Sri Francis Yeoh told the *New Straits Times* last month that if the fast train plan materialised, it would take 90 minutes to travel from KL Sentral to Singapore.

If approved, the project will become the largest to be launched on a private finance initiative (PFI) basis, as encouraged under the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

Construction would take three years but it could be two years before cross-border approvals and land acquisition

and did not affect the legal holdings of the case. He said it was already pointed out during submission on the bias question that the remarks sought to be struck out by Daim and Halim were found in the narration of the background facts in the Court of Appeal judgment. (Metramac appealed against the Court of Appeal