

## **East Coast Rail Link Project “Decision On ECRL Only After Final Report” Transport Minister Says A Through Study Of The Final Report Is Needed**

---

BATU GAJAH : The final report on the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) project is paramount and must be thoroughly studied before any decision can be made on whether or not to go ahead with the project, Transport Minister Anthony Loke said yesterday. “It is fair that we need a final report before we make any decision. The Chinese ambassador (Bai Tian) mentioned that both sides (Malaysia and China) have a working committee to negotiate before making any decision. So far, Malaysian companies (have yet to reach a) final decision,” he said after visiting the Rolling Stock Centre of the China Railway Rolling Stock Corp here.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in an interview with Sin Chew Daily on Monday, said the ECRL project, which was suspended last July, could be continued on a smaller scale if China agreed to it. He said the two countries were still in talks on the matter and had not arrived at a solution. Meanwhile, Loke said Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd would receive nine KTM Electric Train Service (ETS) sets in the second quarter of this year. “There will be more ETS coverage, especially on the Kuala Lumpur – Ipoh – Butterworth route.”

Bai Tian said most countries were discussing having rail transportation as it had become one of the affordable means of transportation, and that Malaysia should follow suit. Asked when the report would be completed, he said he did not have a specific timeline.

In Kuantan, State Basic Amenities, Public Delivery System and Innovation Committee Chairman Datuk Seri Norol Azali Sulaiman said Dr Mahathir’s announcement on the ECRL project gave renewed hope to the people of the East Coast for the better and more systematic transportation system. Bernama

---

**SOURCE: NEW STRAITS TIMES | PAGE: 7 (NEWS) | 4 JANUARY 2019**