

JB - Singapore rail gets "nod" both countries will set up joint company once full approval is given by Malaysia

SINGAPORE: The Malaysian government has called into question the future of multibillion – dollar rail projects since Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad took power in May. Now it appears to be ready to proceed with at least one. The cabinet had given in-principle approval for a rail project linking Johor Baru with Singapore, said Malay Mail online in a report, citing Transport Minister Anthony Loke. It is still looking at costs and other details. This project was delayed by two months due to the general election. A known Singapore critic, Dr Mahathir has wanted to cancel a proposed multi-billion dollar high-speed rail (HSR) project connecting the city state to Kuala Lumpur as it was too expensive, while saying it might happen in the future.

Dr Mahathir's stance prompted Singapore's Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan to tell Parliament on July 9 that his government would seek compensation for all costs incurred if Malaysia cancelled the 350 km Kuala Lumpur- Singapore railway link. For now, it seems to be a go for the 4 km Johor Baru – Singapore rail line, which will be able to transport 10,000 travellers in one direction every hour. The two countries will set up a joint company for the project after the full approval is given by Malaysia. Bloomberg

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