

IF PRIVATE INVESTMENT INVOLVED

# Loke: KL-Singapore HSR talks may be revived

(9 MARCH 2023) NST, P6

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The revival of the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail (HSR) project will be discussed again if it involves private investment, said Transport Minister Anthony Loke.

Loke said so far no decision had been made by the government regarding HSR after the project was terminated in 2021.

He said the ministry had received permission from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to negotiate the revival of the project as long as it did not

involve government funding.

"We are open to any proposal as long as it involves private investment. Currently, no specific proposal has been accepted."

"No timeline for this, because you know the bilateral agreement between Malaysia and Singapore has been terminated by the previous government. Right now, there is no urgency in terms of reaching arfy milestones."

"We are open to a completely new funding mechanism and implementation model," he told reporters at Invest Malaysia 2023



An artist's impression of the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High Speed Rail's Melaka station. Transport Minister Anthony Loke (inset) says no decision has been made by the government regarding the project so far. PIC FROM MYHSR FACEBOOK

conference here yesterday.

The HSR, originally announced by former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak in 2010, aimed to cut down land travel time between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore to only 90 minutes.

The 350-kilometre route, which was originally expected to be completed by 2026, would have significantly opened up economic opportunities for the localities surrounding the eight stations serviced along the way.

The railway project was terminated on Jan 1, 2021, with Malaysia having to compensate Singapore with a whopping RM320 million as part of its obligation under the HSR Bilateral Agreement.

On the development of the Johor Baru-Singapore Link Rapid

Transit System project, Loke said the project was going smoothly.

He said the government was committed to completing it according to the schedule, which was towards the end of 2026 before starting operation in 2027.

On the proposed construction of a port on Carey Island, Loke said the proposed development of a third port in Port Klang was not expected to affect the existing port competition there.

He said the Port Klang Authority had conducted a study for two years since 2019 on the proposed construction of the third port and the report showed that it was feasible and suitable to be used as the third port in Selangor.

"The government has not opened any tender yet. There are many stakeholders there. We

have talked to the state government, and we have to talk to the Finance Ministry and many others.

"The entire project is not just the port, but also the development of the port city. Right now it's still a very preliminary stage."

According to Loke, the development of Carey Island port was expected to take a long time for the next 30 years with the first phase of construction for conventional cargo use.

"Port Klang has presented a conceptual design of the port to me. The first phase will not be a container port, but conventional cargo because Westport does not carry conventional cargo."

"There are at least four phases in terms of development of Carey Island."