

KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN
TARIKH: 9 MAC 2017 (KHAMIS)

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KERATAN AKHBAR
UTUSAN MALAYSIA (DALAM NEGERI) : MUKA SURAT 28
TARIKH : 9 MAC 2017 (KHAMIS)

Tol tanpa henti beroperasi tahun depan



FADILLAH YUSOF

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KUALA LUMPUR 8 Mac - Sistem Aliran Tol Tanpa Henti (MLFF) yang dapat melancarkan lagi perjalanan pengguna lebuhraya dijangka beroperasi pada tahun depan.

Menteri Kerja Raya, Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof berkata, sistem tersebut akan dimulakan secara

berperingkat di beberapa lebuhraya sebelum dilaksanakan sepenuhnya pada 2020.

Menurutnya, projek perintis bagi sistem terbabit telah dimulakan di **Taman Teknologi Malaysia (TPM)** bersama syarikat swasta dengan dana daripada **Kementerian Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi (MOSTI)**.

"Walau bagaimanapun, kami belum pasti lagi sama ada akan menggunakan sistem terbabit

tetapi ia adalah sebahagian daripada proses percubaan kami.

"Kini, kami mahu sektor swasta untuk membuat tawaran mengenai sistem terbaik yang mereka ada bagi projek ini," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian dalam majlis pelancaran Tanjakan Hubungan Kuchai di persimpangan bertingkat Taman Desa, Lebuhraya Pantai Baharu (NPE) di sini, hari ini.

SMOOTH TRAFFIC

New toll system from next year

KUALA LUMPUR: The multilane free-flow (MLFF) system for highways nationwide will be implemented in stages beginning next year until 2020.

Works Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof said the system would enable smooth traffic flow and faster cashless toll collection.

"There will be no more booths and barriers at the toll plazas when the system is fully implemented by 2020.

"The MLFF system will use radio-frequency identification stickers installed on vehicles (stored with value for payment).

"Motorists will no longer have to slow down for toll collection," he said at the opening of the Kuchai Link Ramp at Taman Desa Multilayer Interchange yesterday.

He said the system, being tested at Technology Park Malaysia, had proven to be effective.

The Kuchai Link Ramp linking Besraya Highway and New Pantai Expressway (NPE) was officially opened to motorists yesterday, following more than 20 months of construction.

The 1km-long ramp, built at a cost of RM56 million, will reduce travel time, particularly during peak hours, by 10 minutes.

"With the ramp in place, motorists from Besraya don't need to go through traffic lights at the Kuchai Lama Intersection before heading to NPE," said Fadillah.

"More than 100,000 motorists and people in the surrounding area will benefit from the ramp."

The construction of the one-lane one-way ramp by IJM Corp Bhd commenced on June 20, 2015, and was completed on Feb 27 this year, four months ahead of schedule.

Fadillah said with the completion of the ramp, Besraya had started preliminary works on the Kuchai Lama Interchange upgrading project.

"The upgrade, costing RM60 million, will see roads widened and an extension built linking the Kuchai Link Ramp. Upon completion, motorists will have direct access to the NPE."

Present were Malaysian Highway Authority director-general Datuk Ismail Md Salleh and IJM Corp chief executive officer and managing director Datuk Soam Heng Choon.



Tol tanpa henti beroperasi tahun depan



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Change due in R&D sectors of civil service



A FORMER secretary-general of the Finance Ministry recently wrote about the country's burgeoning civil servants to population ratio.

It is the highest in the Asia-Pacific with 1.6 million people or 11% of the country's labour force.

It may be difficult to sustain. Malaysia's ratio of civil servants is reported to be 1:19 civilians. As a comparison, the ratio in Indonesia is 1:110, in China it is 1:108, in Singapore it's 1:71.4 and in South Korea the ratio is 1:50.

The figure was later disputed on the grounds that the ratio would be different if the army and police were excluded. Most other countries do not include the police and the army in their numbers. It is therefore not comparing apples to apples.

Whatever it is, the civil service is a major financial commitment of the nation.

It has been reported that we are expected to spend RM76bil in salaries and allowances for the civil service this year. A more important question to ask is, how do we get the best from the civil service?

Few would dispute the fact that over the years there have been vast improvements in the civil service.

One which has been well publicised is the faster processing of passports by the Immigration Department. I still remember my first application for an international passport in 1969.

I needed a passport for my travel to Melbourne, Australia to study chemical engineering at Monash University. The immigration office then was situated next to the old KL railway station. Then we had to jostle to get to the immigration officer at the front desk.

There was no numbering system like we do now. And queing up was not the norm. So I had to spend virtually the whole day just to submit the necessary forms. We could only collect the passport two weeks later.

It is different now. Just two months ago, it took me less than an hour to get my passport renewed at the UTC, the Urban Transformation Centre, a project under the National Blue Ocean Strategy, NBOS program. Admittedly, it is not just the Immigration Department which has witnessed positive change.

The Road Transport Department (JPJ) has also made significant improvements. For example there is no more hassle renewing driving licenses.

Renewing road tax is also done online. Again everything is done in quick time.

Notwithstanding, there is one sector of the civil service which can do with some changes. This refers to the R&D civil service.

Over the years, the government has invested significant amounts of money financing R&D in the many public research institutes. These include the likes of **SIRIM, MIMOS, Nuclear Malaysia**, NAHRIM, FRIM, MARDI and many more.

This is very much in line with the nation's commitment to drive innovation and build a strong research culture in the country. Though there have been some successful breakthroughs in the R&D, the efficiency of spending can do with some improvements.

Firstly, because the institutes operate independently of each other, duplications in some research areas are unavoidable.

Secondly, there is little sharing of resources especially for expensive equipment which are often underutilised and also not well maintained.

Thirdly, collaboration among the institutes is almost absent. It is no wonder that policy makers have generally become less convinced of the power and potential of investing in R&D, which is unfortunate.

A recent attempt to improve the coordination of the institutes has yet to see the light of day. The idea to establish a Research Management Agency, RMA, initiated by the EPU remains a subject of speculation.

RMA could have been a good start to put the nation's public sector R&D on a more solid footing. Many years ago, during the time of Dr BC Sekhar, better known as Mr Natural Rubber, an idea to put all the R&D civil service under one scheme along the lines of the PTD was mooted.

Under the scheme, R&D personnel can move among the many institutes as and when needed. It may be a good time to revisit that idea and make the nation's civil service R&D more motivated and serve as a strong force to drive the nation's innovation agenda!

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R&D civil service needs change