

Rafizi jumps the gun on MRT claims

PKR strategic director Rafizi Ramli claimed the Mass Rail Transit (MRT) project may balloon to RM100 billion, close to three times its initial estimate.

"I've been talking to people at the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) ... they're now talking about the RM100 billion mark. The initial figure bandied was around RM37 billion and then it was RM50 to RM60 billion," he said at the PKR headquarters yesterday.

Asked whether he had evi-

dence to back the claim, Rafizi said: "I'd rather jump the gun when it comes to projects like this.

"MRT is going to be the largest public expenditure spending and debt that the rakyat has to incur. It is important that we study everything on MRT to ensure that it is done properly, otherwise the debt will enslave the country for two to three generations."

He said it was difficult to provide conclusive figures as public infrastructure proj-

ects such as the MRT were conducted in ways "shrouded in secrecy and managed in a cloak-and-dagger style".

"I rather be the bad boy and throw out this figure to put the government on the defence on this number now bandied in the market. Prove to us whether it's true or otherwise in the interest of controlling the price of the project," he said.

"If you continue to allow them sole discretion without public scrutiny there will be a

repeat of what had happened (in past projects)."

Rafizi said he had raised a red flag over the matter for early scrutiny in the hope that the project would not end up like the Ampang LRT line extension project, which he claimed was awarded to a non-qualified consortium.

The MRT project has three lines extending 150km and is part of the Government Transformation Programme to improve public transportation. — Malaysiakini