

MRT CUTS CARBON EMISSION, TRAFFIC

SUSTAINABLE development is a key agenda for the world. In Malaysia, sustainable development is enshrined in the Economic Transformation Programme, premised on the noble agenda of achieving high income, but with inclusiveness and sustainability.

Sustainable development is more than just the environment. The environment is one of three pillars of sustainability. The other two are the needs of society and the economy.

The United Nations, after years of deliberations among member states, launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) two years ago.

They continue from where the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) left off.

The goals are to guide member states to formulate national action plans to support global sustainability.

These include access to energy, water, food, security, wealth, health and opportunities to ensure a good quality of life for all.

The UN identified 17 goals under SDGs, including climate change. Climate change is vital as it would not only impact other goals but can be impacted by other goals.

Access to sustainable energy is a critical goal. Without energy, many activities would cease.



The MRT has, in a single stroke, reduced the per capita emission of carbon. FILE PIC

But energy does not mean we can tolerate all energy sources. Increasingly, with a new understanding of global warming and climate change, there is a growing preference for the non-fossil kinds.

Except for the United States administration, where the cli-

mate change claim is considered a hoax, other countries are replacing or reducing their dependence on fossil energy, especially coal.

And at a time when the cost of fossil is lower, many attempts are made to reduce usage and be more energy efficient.

One important sector where energy saving can make a difference to carbon emission is transportation.

Countries where the use of cars is popular show large carbon footprints. The US is known for this.

China has joined the ranks of

countries with a high per capita carbon emission.

While China is pursuing a renewable energy programme to phase out coal, the US is reviving its coal mining industry.

The problem for the world is that the impact on global warming is not just confined to countries that emit large amounts of carbon.

The emission is borderless. The global climatic system is impacted wherever the emissions originate. All must do their bit.

This is where the launch of the mass rapid transit (MRT) is positive for SDGs. With its implementation, as a country, we have in a single stroke reduced the per capita emission of carbon.

MRT does not only contribute to cost savings for commuters in the Klang Valley, it also reduces traffic congestion.

Despite such positives, it has not stopped people from criticising the MRT. The fact that the MRT was completed without delay is a demonstration that we have world-class infrastructure companies.

Kudos to the government for persisting with this important project despite objections from some.

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