



MEDIA RELEASE

GROUNDBREAKING MARKS START OF CONSTRUCTION FOR RTS LINK PROJECT

*Virtual ceremony witnessed by over 200 guests from various
locations held to comply with CMCO*

Johor Bahru, 22 November 2020: A groundbreaking ceremony was held today to mark the start of construction for the Rapid Transit System (RTS) Link between Johor Bahru and Singapore Project.

The groundbreaking ceremony was carried out at the site of the future Immigration, Customs and Quarantine (ICQ) Building in Bukit Chagar. It was however officiated by Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, The Sultan of Johor, virtually from Istana Bukit Serene.

The ceremony was changed to a virtual event on the advice of His Majesty as he was concerned about the safety of the participants if a physical event had taken place even after the lifting of the Conditional Movement Control Order in Johor Bahru.

The RTS Link between Malaysia and Singapore will be a railway service with two stations, one at Bukit Chagar in Johor Bahru, and the other at Woodlands North in Singapore. The link is targeted to begin operations by the end of 2026 and will provide an easy and efficient border crossing between Malaysia and Singapore.

Present with His Majesty at Istana Bukit Serene were Duli Yang Amat Mulia Tunku Ismail Ibni Sultan Ibrahim, Tunku Mahkota Johor; Johor Menteri Besar YAB Datuk Haji Hasni Bin Mohammad and Johor State Secretary YB Dato' Haji Azmi Bin Rohani.

At the same time, Johor Executive Council Member for Public Works, Transportation and Infrastructure YB Mohd Solihan Badri and the other State Executive Council Members as well as Federal and Johor State Government agency heads joined the event via Zoom video conferencing from Bangunan Sultan Ismail at Kota Iskandar, Iskandar Puteri.

Minister of Transport YB Datuk Seri Ir. Wee Ka Siong participated in the event via Zoom video conferencing from the Ministry in Putrajaya.

Other guests including Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission Chief Commissioner Datuk Seri Azam Baki, RTS Operations Pte Ltd Chairman Datuk Syed Mohamed Ibrahim, and Prasarana Malaysia Berhad



President Group Chief Executive Officer Encik Muhammad Nizam Alias and also joined the event virtually.

In total, around 200 guests celebrated this historic event from different locations in Johor Bahru, Putrajaya and other parts of the country.

At Bukit Chagar, the actual groundbreaking event was witnessed by Malaysia Rapid Transit System (MRTS) Sdn Bhd Chairman Datuk Isham Ishak, who is also Secretary-General of the Transport Ministry; Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) Chief Executive Officer Datuk Mohd Zarif Hashim and RTS Link Project Director Ir Zulkifli Mohamed.

MRTS is a wholly-owned subsidiary of MRT Corp and was appointed as the Malaysian infrastructure company (InfraCo) of the RTS Project. Its role is to develop and own the Malaysian infrastructure of the RTS Link.

To launch the groundbreaking, His Majesty first signed an electronic plaque at Istana Bukit Serene which triggered sirens and pyrotechnics in Bukit Chagar. A bore piling machine then drilled into the ground, signifying the completion of the groundbreaking.

A video presentation on the project was then shown before the official event concluded.

In his welcome speech, Zarif said RTS Link will be the catalyst that will transform Johor Bahru into a modern sustainable city.

“Public transport which is smart and efficient will help boost economic activities and elevated Johor Bahru’s status as a focal point for the best human capital in the region,” he said.

He said the RTS Link will be the first light rail transit system to be built in Johor Bahru, a major gateway into the southern part of Peninsula Malaysia. In view of this, it was important for the project to be implemented according to schedule and international standards.

Zarif said Malaysia’s portion of the cost of developing the RTS Link Project was RM3.7 billion which included the construction of a station at Bukit Chagar, depot at Wadi Hana, viaducts through the city centre of Johor Bahru and over the Straits of Johor to the Malaysian-Singapore boundary.

The cost also included the construction of a four-storey Immigration, Customs and Quarantine Complex at Bukit Chagar. This facility will be part of a transit-oriented development where there will also be a Multimodal Transport Hub and mixed property development.

He said Adil Permata Sdn Bhd, which is the developer of these property developments, has been appointed as contractor to carry out advance works such as site clearing, utility relocation works, and others.

“Forty percent of the total infrastructure construction cost will be allocated to Bumiputera contractors, including those from Grade 1 to Grade 6 from Johor.



With the depot for the RTS Link now located in Wadi Hana, there will be many opportunities for local businesses to be involved in the maintenance, repair and overhaul supply chain and in building local expertise in the rail technology industry.

Meanwhile, Zarif also said that an RTS Link Station Façade Design Competition will be launched on 23 November 2020. He said it was His Majesty's idea that such a competition be organised for the project.

"I extend my deepest appreciation to His Majesty for agreeing to be the Patron and to be the Chairman of the Jury Panel of the competition," he said.

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