PERPUSTAKAAN AWAM PASIR GUDANG

KERATAN AKHBAR BERKAITAN PASIR GUDANG

01 SEPT 2016
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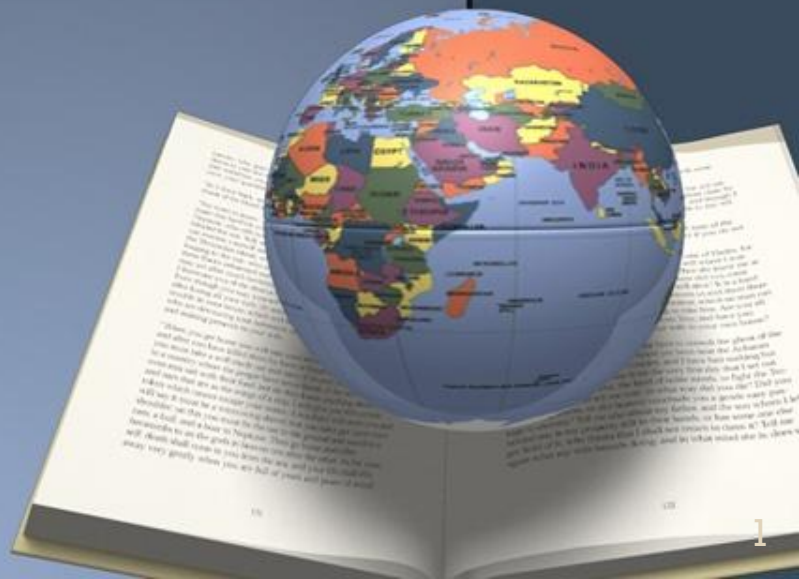


NEW STRAITS TIMES

PRIME NEWS

Maglev trains for JB region by 2019

JOHOR BARU M.R.T: Firm to carry out study soon, report ready by first-half of next year

A JALIL HAMID AND SHAREN KAUR
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

A PRIVATE company is proposing to build a mass rapid transit (MRT) system in Johor using magnetic levitation, or Maglev technology.

Johor ruler Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar told the *New Straits Times* in an interview recently that a company was studying the possibility of setting up the Maglev MRT project.

The sultan said the project, which was not related to the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore high-speed rail (HSR) system, would link Johor Baru, Pasir Gudang, Kempas, Iskandar Puteri and other areas around the state capital.

He said the company was also looking at the proposal to extend the services to Singapore in view of the daily congestion on the Causeway.

The Maglev trains in Johor would be a breakthrough for the country.

Currently, the Federal Government is constructing two MRT lines in the Klang Valley — Sungai Buloh-Kajang (SBK Line) and Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya (SSP Line) — using standard-gauge trains.

The difference between Maglev and standard-gauge train is that a Maglev train does not have wheels — it uses a strong electromagnetic force to lift and propel it forward.

Unlike standard-gauge trains, there is no friction between the wheels and tracks in Maglev trains, therefore, reducing wear and tear.

While Maglev trains are more expensive, their characteristics and infrastructure requirements make them easier for expansion of service when passenger demand grows, without having to build huge trains and stations. This allows savings on cost of implementation and land acquisition.

Meanwhile, sources close to the Johor company said the proposed Maglev line in Johor was expected to use low-speed trains due to the short length of the proposed tracks, which was slightly more than 100km.

The sources said the MRT project would link Johor Baru city centre to Kulai, Ulu Tiram, Pasir Gudang and Iskandar Puteri, and the company had obtained the exclusive right to do a feasibility study.

"The exclusive right was given by the Johor State Economic Planning Unit (UPAC) a few months ago after a presentation by the company."

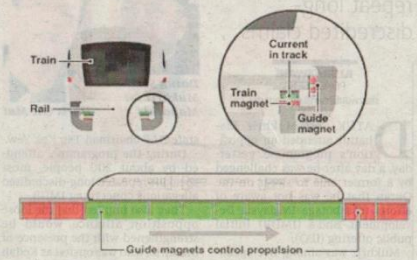
The sources said the company would be embarking on the study soon, which it expected to complete in six months. The study report would be submitted within the first-half of next year.

It is understood that the company planned to finish building the Maglev MRT line in 2019. No estimates were given in terms of construction cost but a project of that scale could easily exceed RM40 billion.

In comparison, the construction cost for the Klang Valley SBK Line, which is 51km long, is RM23 billion while the SSP Line, which is 52.2km in length, is RM32 billion.

The Maglev MRT project will greatly benefit Johor as the state population is expected to increase with infrastructure development and housing projects.

Sources said the line would integrate with the HSR project in Iskandar Puteri, and also the Keretapi Tanah Melayu Bhd train services at JB Sentral.



*(Above) The **Shanghai Maglev Train** that connects Pudong International Airport and the city outskirts in China. (Below) Diagram of how a **Maglev system works.***