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LETTERS

NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY

ALL MUST PLAY PART TO ENSURE SUCCESS

THE National Transport Policy (2019-2030) (NTP) is one of the fundamental policies charting the country's future growth in line with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

The document, launched by Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad last October, is a living policy instrument that plots the direction of the transport system.

It emphasises sustainability as the cornerstone and spells out five policy thrusts — strengthening governance; optimising, building and maintaining transport infrastructure, services and networks; enhancing safety, integration, connectivity and accessibility; advancing towards a green transport ecosystem; and expanding global footprint and promote internationalisation — and 23 strategies guided by three key pillars.

The NTP aims to develop a comprehensive transport sector, to accelerate growth and improve the people's wellbeing.

It covers aviation, shipping, freight and land transport.

The direction set forth in the NTP is commendable as it encompasses other piecemeal transport-related policies into one document upon engagements with stakeholders.

As the nation gears towards a well-developed and progressive economy, competing on the same footing with other regional and Asia-Pacific countries around a seamless and cost-effective transport system is important.

Being a trading nation that depends on the shipping sector in handling more than three-quarters of international trade, the NTP is expected to bolster the maritime sector, taking into account the expansion of port and shipping facilities and services, and its connectivity.

Similarly, the aviation sector will have a facelift and expansion with extended services to cater to increased demand of passengers and cargo. On land and freight, the emphasis is to boost the railway sector.

Dr Mahathir wants Malaysia to emulate the success of Japan and South Korea's rail networks. Even China has done admirably well in this area.

The Light Rail Transit, Mass Rapid Transit, KTM Komuter and Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit projects are testimony to the seriousness of the NTP to create effective rail connectivity and reduce vehicle congestion.

Nonetheless there are many challenges.

Although the provision of subsidies and discounts has gradually increased public ridership



LRT, MRT and KVMRT are all evidence of efforts to establish well-rounded rail connectivity.

since their introduction last year, congestion and high accident rates are a factor.

Therefore, more first and last-mile connectivity, facilities and seamless service with reliable timing are among the expectations of users who opt for this mode of transport.

However, the triumph of the NTP is not solely dependent on

the government.

The government has committed financially a huge part of the physical development budget, but considering the nature and dynamism of the transport sector, cooperation with the private sector and support from the public are needed to realise the NTP's potential.

Hence, the ministry and agen-

cies should monitor the execution of items throughout the duration of the policy. The NTP is not just part of the shared prosperity vision, it is also a shared responsibility of the people.

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