

# Maglev trains set to revolutionise Johor

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The proposed magnetic elevation train travels along a guideway that uses magnets to create lift and propulsion. (NSTP File Pix)

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By **Chuah Bee Kim and Ahmad Fairuz Othman** - August 31, 2016 @ 3:29pm

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JOHOR BARU: The proposed plan for a Maglev (magnetic levitation) train service here, as revealed by Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, will spur a new economic playing field for Johor and create a big leap for Johor Baru in terms of transport infrastructure.

A Chinese company is conducting a study on the project's feasibility.

The project will be developed under a private finance initiative, and is expected to cover a rail network that spans from the eastern to western suburbs of Iskandar Malaysia in south Johor.

If approved, the project will make Malaysia among a handful of countries that have Maglev trains.

Johor Indian Business Association president S.P. Sivakumar said global economic giants, such as China, were setting their sights on Johor to invest in large-scale projects.

He said the state owed this to Sultan Ibrahim, a visionary ruler in tune with the future of the global economic shift.

"Good infrastructure will attract huge investments to the state, and the Maglev trains will be a step in the right direction.

"The trains will spur a new economic playing field for Johor, allowing China to prioritise Johor when deciding on expanding its manufacturing companies here.

"Johor's economy is expected to grow faster than other states. The state will be an economic powerhouse, and, with that, more people will be coming to live and work in Johor," said Sivakumar, who is also Malaysian Indian Commerce Association president.

In an exclusive interview with the *New Straits Times* published yesterday, Sultan Ibrahim said a company was studying the possibility of setting up the Maglev project in Johor.

The ruler said the project would link Pasir Gudang, Kempas, Iskandar Puteri and others areas, and the company would also look at the Maglev entering Singapore, in view of the massive traffic jam at the Causeway every day.

A Maglev vehicle travels along a guideway that uses magnets to create lift and propulsion.

Among the well-known services of this kind is the Shanghai Maglev Train, known as Transrapid, which connects Pudong International Airport and the outskirts of central Pudong in Shanghai, China, along a

30.5km track.

Seri Alam Properties Sdn Bhd senior general manager (township division) Frankie Tan Kiat said Maglev trains caused less pollution and moved faster than existing train systems in the Klang Valley.

“If the system is built here, it will create a big leap for the city, as such trains are only available in China, Korea and Japan.

“A Maglev project in Johor means the state will have a transport system that is better than some major cities in Europe that still rely on trams and commuter trains.”

Tan said the projected growth in the population of southern Johor required an efficient and green transport system that would provide transportation between the different areas in greater Johor Baru.