

Hybrid buses to ply the roads at Johor's Medini City

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Iskandar Regional Development Authority (Irda) chief executive Datuk Ismail Ibrahim (left) with Medini Iskandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd managing director and chief executive officer Dr James Tee in front of a hybrid bus which will be in operation at Medini City, Johor. Pix by Zain Ahmed

By **Ahmad Fairuz Othman**
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ISKANDAR PUTERI: A memorandum of understanding was signed between Mitsui & Co Ltd, Medini Iskandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd, HINO Motor Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd and Handal Indah Sdn Bhd to bring to Medini City the first hybrid bus in Malaysia.

The agreement is a culmination of work by Mitsui and Medini Iskandar Malaysia to invite vehicle manufacturer HINO to conduct a trial run for its hybrid bus through Medini City here.

The hybrid bus will be operated by Handal Indah and its trial run will run for five months starting next month.

There will be six routes for the trial run, one of it being the Iskandar Puteri route that allows commuters to travel from Puteri Harbour Ferry Terminal to Larkin Sentral via Medini.

Iskandar Regional Development Authority (Irda) chief executive Datuk Ismail Ibrahim said the hybrid bus was an option which could be used in the upcoming Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in the growth region here.

He said Iskandar Malaysia's population is expected to increase to three million people by 2025, and it is important for the people to migrate to a culture that emphasises public transport usage.

"Road connectivity will be boosted for public transportation. Plans are underway to ensure Iskandar Malaysia folk migrate to using more public transportation.

"Currently, the ratio for private vehicle usage to public transport users is 85:15 for each 100 people in Iskandar Malaysia, and we want to improve this rate to make more people use public transport in the future," said Ismail.

A statement by the four entities involved in the project said the hybrid bus test run was in accordance with Iskandar Malaysia's Low Carbon Society Blueprint, which aims to reduce carbon intensity in Iskandar Malaysia by 58 per cent by 2025.

The MoU was signed between Medini Iskandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd managing director and chief executive officer Dr James Tee and HINO Motors Sales (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd managing director Ken Iwamoto.

It was witnessed by Ismail, Mitsui & Co. Ltd divisional operation officer Yoshiyuki Enomoto, Handal Indah Sdn Bhd operations and marketing department managing director Lim Chern Fang, Handal Indah managing director Rozlan Abu Bakar, and Embassy of Japan in Malaysia first secretary Keisuke Tanaka.