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Malaysia should take a close look at Japan's HSR technology

MALAYSIA should take a close look at Japan's railway technology in developing the Kuala Lumpur (KL)-Singapore high-speed rail (HSR) project.

Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali said the country is well-versed with rail transportation as demonstrated by the Shinkansen HSR system.

"We will continue to discuss this matter. The technology behind the Shinkansen is one of the best in the world, and we should look into it for the HSR project," he told reporters at the Gombak parliamentary constituency's Chinese New Year celebration in Kuala Lumpur on Satuday.

Azmin, who is also the Gombak MP, said he managed to gain some insight on the business model and the financial structure required to finance such a project during his recent visit to Japan.

In December, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was reported as saying that the KL-Singapore HSR project would be continued, but it may require certain adjustments to reduce its costs.

Pic by Razak Ghazali

Azmin says Japan is well-versed with rail transportation as demonstrated by the Shinkansen HSR system

Meanwhile, Azmin said during the visit, he was also briefed on smart agriculture technology which could boost productivity, in line with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030. He said Malaysia is a fertile country, capable of producing high quality crops, and is not too vulnerable to natural disasters.

"We want to look at the model used in Japan to boost agriculture productivity in this country," said Azmin.

He said Malaysia's food import bill is close to RM60 billion per year, but the country is actually capable of producing more food products through new technologies.

"One of the government's policies is for farmers to have access to new technologies to boost their yield, which would help reduce the urban-rural gap," he added. — *Bernama*