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# TNB's new RM33m transmission booster

*RM32.5m transmission towers project on Pulau Besar provides power to island folks*

by **MOKHRIZ MOKHTAR**

THE completion of Tenaga Nasional Bhd's (TNB) RM32.5 million transmission towers project on Pulau Besar has brought new life to the people on the island with 24-hour electricity supply and abandoning the use of diesel-powered generators.

Malacca TNB distribution division GM Datuk Baderul Sham Saad said the electricity was transmitted via a high voltage overhead transmission line attached to 12 monopole towers from Pantai Siring in Merlimau and across 4.2km stretch of the Straits of Malacca to Pulau Besar.

"This project is a 50:50 joint development between TNB and Malacca State Development Corp (PKNM). It is the first overhead electricity line connection using the monopole towers in Malaysia as compared to the conventional use of submarine cable," he told reporters during a media visit to Pulau Besar.

The power is supplied from TNB's existing main intake substation in Telok Mas and channelled to a main switching substation near Pantai Siring. The substation is connected to the main switching station on the island. Presently, the transmission infrastructure is commissioned at 11kV.

Baderul said that the transmission tower can be upgraded to 33kV and 132kV if required without replacing the towers.

The success of the project, he said, has resulted in the company to consider installing similar infrastructure compared to submarine cable as the monopole towers are easier to install and maintain and are more reliable.

"The monopole towers also cost less compared to a submarine power

cable transmission connection which we estimate will cost us about M90 million for this project," Baerul said.

He is optimistic that the usage of monopoles will encourage other countries to build similar structures due to its unique features and cost effectiveness. The project is part of TNB's initiative to become a world-class transmission network operator.

Malacca Public Work and Amenities Committee deputy chairman Datuk Zaidi Atan applauded TNB on the project. He said the supply of electricity to the island will attract more investors in tourism and other projects on Pulau Besar.

He was impressed that the transmission towers were completed in February 2015, six months earlier than planned.

"These monopoles will become the new tourist attraction in this state (Malacca) and it is expected to boost the tourism industry as well as business activities on the island," said

Zaidi.

Meanwhile, Sekolah Menengah Agama Maahad Tahfiz Al-Quran Pulau Besar senior assistant principal Azmi Ismail said the school's overhead cost has decreased since TNB supplied electricity to the island.

Before the supply of electricity by TNB, the school, which currently has 135 students and 18 teachers, was dependent on generators for electricity.

"The disadvantage of using the generators is they have a cut-off time every four hours where we have to manually reset them. At times, our computers are damaged due to the sudden electricity cut.

"The unavailability of consistent power supply (using the generators) is one of the reasons we had to delay our plan to have more computers or to set up a computer and science lab," said Azmi, adding that the cost of maintaining the generators is also costly.

Pulau Besar Museum assistant operation officer Farnizam Khalid said the tourists arrival to the museum had increased to 200 people a month.

"Previously, we had an average of 100 people who visit the museum. Since electricity has been supplied to this island, we are seeing more tourists coming to the island.

"With the availability of electricity on this island, more chalets will be set up soon and this in turn will increase the number of tourists," he said.

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According to Baderul (inset), this project is a 50:50 joint development between TNB and PKNM and it is the 1st overhead electricity line connection using the monopole towers in Malaysia as compared to the conventional use of submarine cable