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Rail service to give airlines a run for their money

SHOULD the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore high-speed rail project goes as planned, it is expected to challenge the market share of airlines.

The question is, by how much?

Flights between these cities take under an hour, but the overall journey is longer due to extra time to get to the airport and check-in.

With the convenience and time saved, it is likely that more people will switch from travel by air to rail. Lower rail fare could also be an appealing option.



The Velore E has a top speed of 350km an hour

Siemens AG transportation systems group executive management member Friedrich Smaxwil said for distances of up to four hours, rail was a better alternative than airplane.

“Travelling time by rail is shorter than flying, if calculated from point to point. For example, in Spain, there was a shift in market share between train and plane travel when the high-speed rail link between Madrid and Seville opened in 1992. At the end of 1991, air travel commanded the transportation market share of 67% and by 1998, this share dropped to 18%,” he said in his presentation in Madrid recently.

To sum it up, Smaxwil said rail made an attractive proposition compared with airplanes especially for mobility.

As more people move and live in cities, creating demographic changes and rapid urbanisation, authorities are challenged to meeting demand for increased mobility.



The interior of the Club Class

In a survey sponsored by Siemens, business leaders worldwide were asked to rank various factors that affected the growth and prosperity of cities.

Without doubt transportation was highlighted as an important issue as it has the greatest impact on a city's competitiveness.