

MRT construction begins

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Sungai Buloh-Kajang Blue Line of the Klang Valley My Rapid Transit (MRT) project has moved from preparatory works to active construction at 11 sites along its alignment.

MRT Corp strategic communications and public relations director, Amir Mahmood Razak, said there had been no delays and the target completion date remained at mid-2017.

"The first phase, which is from Sungai Buloh to Semantan, will be operational by December 2016, and the full line will be ready by July 2017.

"Out of 85 contracts, 33 work packages including seven viaducts, two depots and the underground line worth RM15.5 billion have been awarded, with more to come this month," Amir said at a press conference yesterday.

The remaining contracts consist of big work packages such as Viaduct 8 (the last 4km of the line in Kajang), rolling stock and station construction, while the smaller contracts are for landscaping, systems and sliding doors among others.

"The full cost of the line will only be known at the end of this year, when all the contracts have been awarded," Amir said.

The 51km line with 31 stations is the first of three lines under the Klang Valley MRT project and will see a 9.5km underground track for seven stations between Kuala Lumpur Sentral and Maluri.

The project is believed



A bird's-eye view of the works on the Merdeka station.

to be Malaysia's largest infrastructure project, and is estimated to cost between RM36 billion and RM50 billion.

On ongoing talks with Jalan Sultan and Jalan Bukit Bintang traders, Amir said compensation was being sorted out but three traders were still refusing to negotiate.

"Out of 23 traders, 18 accepted the points of agreement, so now we want to show that this is indeed a win-win situation and that acquisition/demolition is not in the picture.

"We are also conducting a technical study, to be completed in around five weeks, to

determine if they can stay in the premises during tunnelling works as they requested," he said.

On a more recent development along Jalan Pinggir Zaaba, where residents argued that construction near their homes may cause loss of privacy and health issues, Amir said MRT Corp was working to mitigate these problems.

"We actually applied to acquire 25 homes between 14m and 29m from construction sites, but the Special Compensation Committee said it was unnecessary, so we are now committed to work on (mitigating) noise and dust pollution.

"During construction, hoardings will be used and once the trains are up and running, sound deflectors and netting will be used to mitigate the problems of noise and dust."

Amir also said advanced technology would be used for line construction, such as low-noise trains and rubber-coated tracks.



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