

2020 deadline set for new Klang Valley MRT lines

SPAD is expected to finish study on projects by early 2013 and MRT to start work once approval given is by the government

by AZLI JAMIL

THE completion date for the construction of the second and third Klang Valley mass rapid transit (MRT) lines has been set at 2020, three years after the expected completion of the mammoth 51km Sungai Buloh-Kajang MRT (SBK MRT) line.

The study for both proposed new lines — the first being a circle line around the city centre and a second line that will traverse from northern to southern suburbs of the city — is currently undertaken by Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD). It is expected to be completed early next year.

"We hope to finish the study by early next year and once the scheme is approved by the government, it will be passed on to MRT to be implemented," SPAD's chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar told the press at the soft launch of Rail Asia 2013 — International Rail Industry Exhibition last Thursday.

The first phase of the SBK MRT from Sungai Buloh to Semantan line is expected to be completed by December 2016 while the remaining Semantan to Kajang line is expected to be completed by July 2017.

"We are the project owner and our objective is to make sure the project is completed



(From left) UBM Malaysia Sdn Bhd chairman Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Mustaffa Babjee, Hamid and Dr Judin at the soft launch and media conference of The Rail Asia 2013 in Kuala Lumpur. According to Dr Judin, this exhibition is expected to be the largest forum in the rail industry in this region

by the deadline," said Mass Rapid Transit Corp Sdn Bhd director (stakeholders/land) Haris Fadzilah Hassan.

Out of 51km for the train line and 31 stations, 9.5km will be under the ground with the Bukit Bintang station featuring as its biggest underground station.

"Bukit Bintang is going to be the station where it will have six exits and the traffic dispersion will be efficient as safety of the passengers is important," Haris Fadzilah said.

He added that to date about 40 construction packages worth about RM16 billion have been awarded with another 45 packages to be awarded by year-end.

The cost of the project will

only be made known later though some estimated the cost to be between RM36 and RM50 billion making it one of the biggest infrastructure construction projects in the country.

The project will complement the existing network of mass public transport and is expected to push the public transport usage within Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley region from the existing 17% to 50% by 2020. By then, the total population for the Greater Kuala Lumpur region is expected to exceed 10 million.

Apart from this project, other projects include expanding the existing current train network, implementing the double tracking train from Padang

Besar to Johor Baru, the possibility of building a high speed rail link to Singapore and the extension of Singapore's MRT to Johor Baru.

The Rail Asia 2013 — International Rail Industry Exhibition is organised by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) and will be held in March 2013.

According to CIDB's chief executive Datuk Seri Dr Judin Abdul Karim, it is expected to be the largest forum in the rail industry in this region where 300 participants are expected to congregate.

He added that the forum reflects Malaysia's ambition to be the regional hub for rail expertise.

Pic by Hafzi Mohamed