

# 'Work on MRT lines should start soon'

**LINES 2 AND 3:** Any delay will result in higher cost, says MRT Corp CEO

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**M**ASS Rapid Transit Corp Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) says work on Line 2 and Line 3 of the Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system should start soon, before the cost escalates.

"Any delay will result in the cost rising... we will also be foregoing the economic benefits the MRT can bring to the country," said its chief executive officer Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid.

The MRT project is the largest infrastructure development ever undertaken in Malaysia. All three lines are estimated to cost between RM80 billion and RM90 billion.

The overall cost of the project, however, will only be finalised once all the contracts are awarded.

Construction of Line 1 from Sungai Buloh to Kajang started in 2011.

Azhar hopes the government will give approval for Line 2 and 3, which consist of the

Circle Line looping around the Kuala Lumpur city centre and the north-south line from Selayang to Putrajaya, by the end of this year.

He said this here on Wednesday after commenting on the recent fuel price hike.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak on Monday announced a 20 sen cut per litre for RON95 and diesel subsidies.

Azhar said the lowering of government subsidies is a natural progression to improve public infrastructure and stabilise the economy.

The public will benefit as the savings from lower subsidies will be put to better use such as building transport terminals, and MRT and light rail transit (LRT) systems, he said.

"The money spent on public transport is not going to be wasted. The infrastructure is going to be here for the long term. Public transport is a logical way forward.

"There will be a better integration between the MRT, LRT, monorail, bus and taxi services in Greater Kuala Lumpur, which will help ease traffic burden and improve road safety," he added.

Azhar said Line 1 of the MRT project will be completed by 2016/2017 and the cost will not exceed RM30 billion.

"For Line 1, we have spent only RM4 billion since 2011. For Line 2 and 3, we will spend no more than RM1 billion for each line in the first 24 months after getting the government approval," he said.