

Pasar Rakyat - Cochrane MRT tunnel

INFOGRAPHIC: NST
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- The boring started at **Cochrane Station** and ended one kilometre away at **Pasar Rakyat Station**
- The **Tunnel Boring Machine** can be used in any type of soil and rock
- During the "breakthrough" yesterday, the machine was **operated by a 20-man team** of local engineers and technicians
- The machine, the first of its kind, was **designed specifically for tunnelling** in the city

MRT tunnel work completed in 7 months

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Specially designed boring machine a 'breakthrough'

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THE Klang Valley MRT project marked another milestone yesterday with the completion of tunnel boring work, using the world's first Variable Density Tunnel Boring Machine, from the Cochrane to Pasar Rakyat station of the MRT Sungai Buloh-Kajang Line.

Describing the usage of the ma-

chine as a "breakthrough", MRT Corp acting chief executive officer Haris Fadzillah Hassan said the work, covering 1km, was completed after seven months.

"The breakthrough today also marks the completion of the first section of twin tunnels (between Cochrane station and Pasar Rakyat station) for the 9.5km line without any major issues."

He said this at a special ceremony at Pasar Rakyat station yesterday.

Haris said it was a significant achievement as they completed the first section of the tunnel seven months after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak launched the machine.

"I am confident we will be able to complete constructing the entire length of tunnels by mid-next year as scheduled."

The machine, called Cochrane 2, was launched from the Cochrane Launch Shaft in Cheras last July.

It was designed and jointly developed by the MRT project's underground works contractor, MMC Gamuda KVMRT (T) Sdn Bhd, and manufacturer Herrenknecht AG from Germany, specifically for tunnelling beneath the city.

Haris said tunnelling works in Kuala Lumpur were challenging as the city was built above two different geological formations.

"The tunnel at the western part, which is beneath Kenny Hill, is more consistent and easier to tunnel through."

However, the contractors faced uncertainties and challenges at the eastern part of the city.

"This is because geological formation in the area consists of hard rock with soft overlying, and void

chambers and cavities, which were not easily identified," said Haris.

He said it was a critical milestone as the line's Phase One route, from Sungai Buloh and Semantan, was scheduled to be operational by end of 2016.

Haris said the line was targeted to be completed by July 2017.

"The construction work for the line is 33 per cent completed.

"The underground work is at 50 per cent completion."

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