

# 'Early completion of MRT line saved cost'

## DEC 16 START DATE:

It reduced manpower wastage and ensured project completed within budget, says MRT Corp

### KUALA LUMPUR

**T**HE early completion of the first phase of the Mass Rapid Transit Sungai Buloh-Kajang Line (MRT SBK) between Sungai Buloh and Semantan has not only reduced cost and manpower wastage, but also ensured the project was completed within the budget, said MRT Corp Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations director Datuk Najmuddin Abdullah.

He said operations from the Sungai Buloh to Semantan stations would begin on Dec 16, which was 16 days earlier than scheduled, adding that this would improve the efficiency of the MRT project, which was expected to be fully operational by July.

The RM23 billion MRT SBK Line, which covers 51km and has 31 stations, was one of the projects under the Economic Transformation Programme initiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

"It is also one of the National Key Results Areas to improve urban public transport, and it will connect with the other three urban rail systems, namely the LRT (Light Rail Transit), KTM Komuter and KL Monorail," Najmuddin said.

He said although 16 days might not seem like a big deal, it was substantial from a technical perspective.

"We saved a lot of money, reduced unnecessary construction wastage and the people can enjoy the facility earlier," he said recently.



**A Mass Rapid Transit train being tested at the Sungai Buloh station. File pic**

He said one of the factors that led to the earlier completion was the setting up of an executive committee chaired by Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Dr Ali Hamsa, who is also MRT Corp chairman.

MRT Corp is fully owned by Minister of Finance Incorporated and was set up to be the developer and asset owner of the MRT project.

"The exco, I believe, is the first of its kind involved in any mega projects in Malaysia. It involves secretary-generals from several ministries, such as the Transport, Finance and Health Ministries, together with senior officials from the Selangor government and Kuala Lumpur City Hall," Najmuddin said.

Besides overseeing the project, the committee helped MRT Corp resolve problems related to the federal and state governments in the construction of the project.

MRT Corp has signed mutual agreements with landowners and private companies for joint developments, including an agreement to work with TRX City Sdn Bhd on the development of the Tun Razak Exchange underground MRT station.

"Malaysian Resources Corporation Bhd (MRCB Corp) will build a 300m pedestrian walkway linking

the KL Sentral MRT station and KL Sentral to benefit the public," Najmuddin said.

He said the MRT project had created an economic spin-off for businesses as the line not only made public transport more efficient, increasing productivity and connectivity, but it also increased the value of property and commercial developments.

"The completion of the SBK Line could reduce 160,000 cars on the road, making a significant impact on alleviating traffic congestion."

He said about 400,000 passengers would take the SBK Line daily when it is fully operational, and would greatly benefit low- and middle-income commuters.

"By travelling with MRT, they can reduce their financial burden with regard to costs related to their vehicles, especially on fuel, toll rates and parking fees."

He said fares throughout the SBK Line would be affordable, ranging from RM1 to RM6.40.

From the Sungai Buloh to Semantan stations, Najmuddin said feeder buses would be provided to transport passengers from MRT stations to the nearest LRT station, such as from Pusat Bandar Damansara to KL Sentral. **Bernama**