

No extra cost for MRT Line 2

Company has awarded close to RM27b out of RM32b worth of projects to date

by R KAMALAVACINI

MASS Rapid Transit Corp Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) said the current economic environment including the weaker ringgit will not impact the project cost of MRT Line 2, which connects 37 stations from Sungai Buloh to Serdang and Putrajaya (SSP).

SSP line project director Datuk Amiruddin Ma'aris told *The Malay-*

sian Reserve MRT Corp is confident the Line 2 project cost will remain at RM32 billion, and to date, the company has awarded close to RM27 billion worth of contracts for system and civil work packages.

"One thing we are glad about is the fact that we have already awarded all our system packages. The civil package will be undertaken by local contractors but when it comes to system package, say for example, train signalling or the power supply track works, these works require expertise from abroad, hence joint ventures with locals. All the awards are fixed in ringgit and at this point of time, we

do not foresee any escalation of cost due to the depreciation of the ringgit," Amiruddin said.

The SSP Line, which saw ground-breaking on Sept 15 by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak, will be 52.2km long and support 37 stations, including two proposed stations at Technology Park and Taman Universiti.

The line includes a 13.5km underground track to support 11 stations. It will run from Sungai Buloh to Putrajaya through Kepong, Batu, Jalan Ipoh, Titiwangsa, Kuala Lumpur City Centre, Tun Razak Exchange, Bandar Malaysia, Sungai Besi, Serdang, Universiti Putra

Malaysia and Cyberjaya.

MRT Corp has estimated how much single work costs, including for the system. It has awarded close to RM27 billion out of RM32 billion worth of projects. There are seven system work packages altogether, worth a cumulative RM5 billion.

Underground civil work is the biggest cost component. "If you recall, the award value for underground is RM15.47 billion. That one package alone is nearly half of the entire estimated project cost," Amiruddin explained.

Once operational, the MRT SSP Line is expected to have a daily

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Underground civil work costs the most



Pic by Muhd Amin Nananul

Sungai Buloh MRT depot. The line includes a 13.5km underground track to support 11 stations

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ridership of 529,000 passengers.

He added the remaining RM5 billion worth of contracts will involve work packages on stations, multi-storey carparks, designated supplier items such as escalators, lifts, signages and also several viaduct packages.

"We sequence the tenders as well as the award to suit our work programme because there are times that we do not want to award too early, we need to see the transition and the progress," he said.

He pointed out that one viaduct package contract will be awarded next month, although he did not disclose the contract value.

"We target that by the end of next year, we would have awarded all the work packages. Say maybe for signage, which we have the time, so there's no point for us to award now when the installation year is on 2021," he noted.

Amiruddin said as of now, the work progress for the SSP

line is close to 3% and is bullish to complete and deliver the mega project within the stipulated period.

"The positive impact from the SSP implementation is that if you factor in the contract value, which is about RM32 billion over seven years, it moves the GDP by 1%-2%. So, that is the economic impact of this project and will translate into more job opportunities, both direct and indirectly.

The MRT Line 1, or the SBK Line (Sungai Buloh-Kajang), will be made available to the public by December 2016, and the launching will be on Dec 15, 2016.

"With the SBK Line operational, it will indicate the start of a new era of public transportation in this country," said Amiruddin.

The remaining route from Semantan to Kajang stations will be operational next July. The RM23 billion project, which spans 51km, will have 31 stations in total.