

PM to launch MRT line

> Towards greater mobility, connectivity and liveability in the Klang Valley

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak will launch Malaysia's first Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) today, which will go into service tomorrow.

The first phase of the Sungai Buloh-Kajang (SBK) MRT Line, between Sungai Buloh and Semantan, will form the backbone of the public transport system in the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley region as areas in the northwest and southeast of Klang Valley are not served by any urban rail lines yet.

The Kelana Jaya, Sri Petaling and Ampang Light Rail Transit lines and their extensions only serve the northeast and southwest quadrants of the Klang valley.

MRT Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations director Datuk Najmuddin Abdullah said the MRT project would become a catalyst in changing the transport landscape in Malaysia, beginning with Klang Valley.

He said, among others, the public would benefit from easier and better access to affordable, efficient and reliable public transport.

The first phase of the project will improve the transport connectivity for residents living in Kwasa Damansara, Kota Damansara, Mutiara Damansara, Bandar Utama, Taman Tun Dr Ismail and Semantan.

He said the fares throughout the MRT SBK Line would be an affordable RM1 to RM6.40.

The RM23 billion MRT SBK Line, which covers 51km with 31 stations, is part of the Economic

Transformation Programme (ETP) projects initiated by Najib.

Phase Two, from the Semantan station to Kajang station will be operational by July 31, 2017.

Each train set serving the line will have four cars, allowing a total capacity of 1,200 passengers per trip. With an interval of 3.5 minutes between each train set at peak hours, the MRT SBK Line can expect a daily ridership of about 400,000 passengers when Phase Two is completed.

Najmuddin said at a macro level, the MRT line would also generate work contracts and jobs, which are likely to boost the country's gross domestic product.

It is estimated RM4 billion would be generated for gross national income directly from the construction and operations of the MRT (2011-2020).

At local level, he said there would be economic benefits across a spectrum of groups comprising traders, business operators, service providers and property owners.

In addition, some 112 feeder buses will operate from all 12 stations of the MRT first phase route where commuters only need to pay a fare of RM1.

Another 188 feeder buses would be operated when MRT is completed from Semantan to Kajang next year.

For park-and-ride commuters, there will be a total of 14 multi-storey and open-air carparks, with 8,000 bays at stations along the MRT line. - Bernama