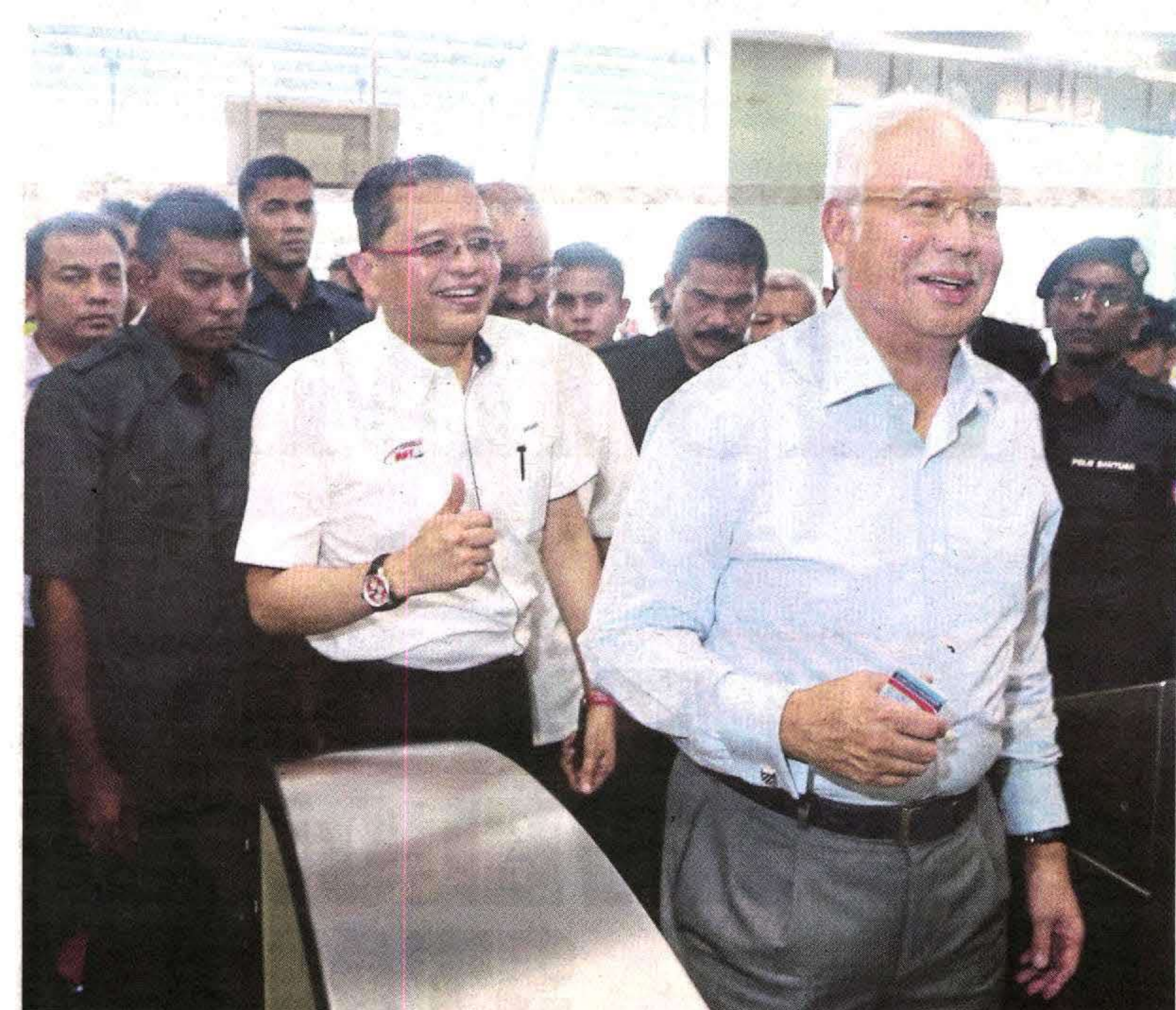


MRT timeline

- AUGUST 2006:** The Kota Damansara-Cheras LRT Line proposal is made public by then deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.
- JULY 2007:** The Transport Ministry approves the alignment of the new line.
- JUNE 2010:** At the tabling of the 10th Malaysia Plan, Najib says the government is considering a RM36 billion Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) proposal from Gamuda Bhd and MMC Corp Bhd.
- DECEMBER 2010:** The cabinet approves the MRT project, with the first line's construction from Sungai Buloh to Kajang to begin in July 2011.
- DECEMBER 2010:** MMC-Gamuda JV Sdn Bhd, appointed as Project Delivery Partner, will be project manager. The project is divided into nine parcels and undertaken on open tender basis.
- FEBRUARY 2011:** A three-month mandatory public display of MRT alignment begins to get feedback from the public.
- JULY 2011:** The prime minister officially launches the project.
- AUGUST 2011:** MRT Corporation Sdn Bhd will be the asset owner of the project and take over from Prasarana Malaysia Bhd on Sept 1, 2011.
- OCTOBER 2011:** MRT Corp shortlists five companies to carry out underground works – MMC-Gamuda Joint Venture, Sinohydro Group, Hyundai-Gadang-Chengal Jaya Joint Venture, Taisei Corp and China Railway Group Ltd.
- JANUARY 2012:** The first two civil work contracts for MRT Sungai Buloh-Kajang (SBK) line is given to UJM Construction Sdn Bhd for Package V5 – from the start of the southern elevated section at Cheras 3rd Mile to Plaza Phoenix – and Ahmad Zaki Sdn Bhd for Package V6 – from Plaza Phoenix to Bandar Tun Hussein Onn.
- MARCH 2012:** MRT Corp appoints MMC-Gamuda as the underground work contractor for the MRT SBK line. It will include the construction of seven underground stations and tunnels for the 9.5km underground alignment of the line.
- AUGUST 2012:** MRT Corp announces the project is in active construction phase.
- DECEMBER 2012:** MRT Corp says the project cost will not exceed RM23 billion and the first MRT line is expected to be completed by July 2017.
- DEC 12, 2012:** MRT Corp and Tenaga Nasional Bhd sign an electricity supply agreement.
- MAY 2013:** Tunnel excavation for MRT SBK line begins with the world's first variable density tunnel boring machine.
- JANUARY 2014:** The variable density tunnel boring machine successfully completes a 1km drive from Cochrane and breaks through to the Tun Razak Exchange.
- JUNE 2014:** The first two train car bodies arrive at Westport. They will be assembled at Malaysia's first train assembly plant in Rasa, Hulu Selangor.
- APRIL 2015:** Commemoration ceremony for the completion of MRT tunnelling work.
- JUNE 2016:** MRT Corp and Rapid Rail Sdn Bhd ink agreement and Rapid Rail is appointed the operator of the SBK line.
- DEC 15, 2016:** Phase 1 of the SBK line is launched.
- DEC 16, 2016:** Sungai Buloh-Semantan stations officially start operations.



Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** at the Kwasa Damansara MRT station yesterday. With him is Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd chief executive officer **Datuk Seri Shahril Mokhtar** (behind Najib). Pic by Muhd Zaaba Zakeria

MRT SBK line a milestone for nation

GOAL: Najib says project brings Malaysia a step forward as developed nation

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THE much-awaited first phase of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Sungai Buloh-Kajang Line service kickstarted at 6am today, marking yet another milestone in the nation's journey towards becoming a developed nation.

In launching the line, which took five years to construct, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Klang Valley commuters would enjoy a month of free rides on the MRT and its feeder buses until Jan 16.

"The MRT project will elevate Malaysia, bringing it one step forward as a developed country.

"No country can be recognised as a developed nation without an efficient and modern public transportation network.

"As a New Year's gift and to give a chance for all to try this new, modern and efficient public transportation facility, Rapid Rail Sdn Bhd will provide free MRT and feeder bus

services for a month.

"Commuters will only be charged beginning Jan 17," he said at the Kwasa Damansara MRT station yesterday.

There was also an additional cheer as the "on time and below budget" first phase megaproject had saved the government a whopping RM2 billion from its initial target cost of RM23 billion.

He also said he did not want the slogan "People first, performance now", coined in 2009, to be an empty slogan or mere political rhetoric without real implementation.

Najib added that it was then that he formed national policies such as the Government Transformation Programme, the Economic Transformation Programme and the National Key Result Areas (NKRAs).

"Out of the seven NKRAs, one of it was to make public transportation the country's highest priority."

The essential ingredient of a first-rate nation was to have good and reliable infrastructure, he said, adding that the government had other projects that placed priority on

connectivity and infrastructure development in the country.

"If we want Malaysia to be a first-rate nation, we must have a very good infrastructure.

"This is why we have the MRT, the LRT (light rapid transit), the High-Speed Rail, the East Coast Rail Line, the Pan-Borneo Highway and many others."

The 21km northern elevated section of the MRT SBK Line involves 12 stations between Sungai Buloh and Semantan.

Other stations ready for operations include Kampung Selamat, Kwasa Damansara, Kwasa Sentral, Kota Damansara, Surian, Mutiara Damansara, Bandar Utama, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Phileo Damansara and Pusat Bandar Damansara.

The second phase of the MRT SBK Line is slated to start operations in July next year. Once in full operation, the entire 51km SBK line from Sungai Buloh to Kajang would take an hour from end to end.

Having personally inspected the feeder bus services, Najib said he believed that passengers would feel "very comfortable" riding on them. The buses will service residential areas situated within a 5km radius of selected MRT stations.

He also said most MRT stations

were equipped with walkways that connected the station to nearby buildings, giving better access to those who lived or worked at a particular building, while being able to enjoy a shopping experience at the stations.

"These facilities are among the steps taken by the government to encourage the usage of public transport among Malaysians, particularly those in the Klang Valley."

With a "Jom naik MRT", (Let's ride the MRT), Najib later invited almost 1,000 attendees at the MRT SBK launch to ride the brand new four-

car carriage from Kwasa Damansara station, stopping at the Kampung Selamat and Sungai Buloh stations before heading back to Kwasa Damansara.

Page 1 pic: Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Najib Razak** riding the **Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) train to the Sungai Buloh station** after officiating the service's first phase of the Sungai Buloh-Kajang line at Kwasa Damansara MRT station yesterday. With him is Transport Minister **Datuk Seri Liew Tiong Lai**.