



MEDIA RELEASE

FIRST TBM BREAKTHROUGH FOR THE MRT SSP LINE

Major milestone achieved as first tunnel section between Bandar Malaysia North Station and Chan Sow Lin Station completed

Kuala Lumpur, 29 January 2019: The first tunnel boring machine (TBM) breakthrough for the MRT Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya (SSP) Line took place today at the Chan Sow Lin MRT Station construction site, marking a major milestone achievement for construction of the Klang Valley MRT Project's second line.

The tunnel section (known as a tunnel drive) between Bandar Malaysia North MRT Station and Chan Sow Lin MRT Station was excavated using the state-of-the-art Variable Density TBM and took approximately 11 months to cover a distance of 1.9 km underground.

Today's breakthrough marked the first completed tunnel drive, out of a total of 16 tunnel drives needed to complete the 13.5km underground section of the SSP line.

The achievement was made more significant as the TBM, codenamed S-776-VD, was the same TBM that successfully completed the first tunnel drive for the MRT Sungai Buloh-Kajang (SBK) Line in January 2014. The TBM underwent refurbishment in a plant in Pusing, Perak, and was redeployed for the SSP Line.

Mass Rapid Transit Corporation (MRT Corp) Sdn Bhd Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations Director Dato' Najmuddin Abdullah said, "Today's breakthrough is a significant milestone in the construction of the SSP Line and we are truly on the way to completing the project on time by 2022."

He congratulated MRT Corp's tunnelling team and MMC Gamuda KVMRT (T) Sdn Bhd for successfully completing this first tunnel section which had challenging geological conditions.

"Alhamdulillah tunnelling had proceeded smoothly although there were some issues as a result of the difficult geology. On top of that, there was the added difficulty of tunnelling beneath the 13-lane Jalan Sungai Besi, busy Jalan Chan Sow Lin and the live LRT tracks near the Chan Sow Lin LRT station," he said.



He added that tunnelling works for the SSP Line will be at full momentum with seven more TBMs being launched within this year. Including the TBM which broke through today, there are a total of five TBMs currently in operation. A total of 12 TBMs will be used and as there are a total of 16 drives, some TBMs will be handling two drives.

Following today's breakthrough, the TBM will be pulled across the Chan Sow Lin Station box and then restarted to excavate its second tunnel drive northwards between Chan Sow Lin Station and the Tun Razak Exchange Station. Once it reaches Tun Razak Exchange Station, the TBM will be disassembled and retrieved in parts.

SSP Line Underground Works Contractor MMC Gamuda KVMRT (T) Sdn Bhd Construction Director Dato' Ubull Din Om said the completion of the first TBM drive was deemed an achievement, given the fact that the ground condition on this drive tipped unfavourably in comparison to the geology experienced in Line 1.

"Geologically, the ground profile of the tunnel alignment falls within Extreme V karstic limestone type, making it very challenging. Karstic limestone is known for its unpredictable ground conditions, making it particularly risky for TBM operations," he said.

He said in 2003 when the SMART tunnelling work was carried out at the same area, numerous sinkholes had formed, leading to significant disruption to traffic and human activities above ground.

He added that tunnelling had proceeded smoothly, with only minor incidences, as a result of the specially designed Variable Density TBM and the experience of MMC-Gamuda's personnel after it was used on the SBK Line. The incidences along Jalan Chan Sow Lin were contained with minimal disruption to people and public properties.

The overall construction progress of the SSP Line is at 41%.

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For media enquiries, please contact:

Mr Leong Shen Li : 012-3196602 / leong.shen-li@mymrt.com.my

Dr. Bhavani Krishna Iyer : 019-312 8303 /bhavani@kvmrt-ug.com.my