

Another eight LRT stations⁵⁷ ready to serve commuters

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By TAN PENG PENG

IT'S all systems go for Sistem Transit Aliran Ringan's (Star) Light Rail Transit (LRT) network in Kuala Lumpur today when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad launches the LRT System I, Phase I and II Network at the RM23mil Bukit Jalil LRT station.

Built with the objective of providing fast, comfortable, reliable and efficient public transportation for city residents, work on Star's LRT Phase I line began in August 1993 and was completed in December 1995.

Covering a distance of 12km and comprising 13 stations, the Phase I line began commercial service in December 1996.

By January 1997, with trains which could ferry 16,000 passengers per hour in each direction, one million

commuters had paid to ride on the LRT.

Under Phase II, a 15km track with 12 stations was built.

The stations are Chan Sow Lin, Cheras, Salak Selatan, Bandar Tun Razak, Tasik Selatan, Sungai Besi, Bukit Jalil, Seri Petaling, PWTC, Titiwangsa, Sentul and Sentul Timur.

While the first eight stations are expected to begin operations this month, the PWTC, Titiwangsa, Sentul and Sentul Timur stations are expected to begin operations towards the end of the year.

Phase II trains have also been upgraded to carry double the capacity of the Phase I trains per trip.

Star chief executive officer Zainal Abdul Ghani said ensuring the utmost safety of the LRT network was of the high-priority for the company.

"Many commuters are not aware of the many sophisticated and fully automated safety

features of the LRT system.

"From the central control station in Ampang, we can monitor the movements of all our LRT trains.

"The Automatic Train Stop (ATS) for example is designed to ensure the speed limit of the LRT is never exceeded," said Zainal.

He said the LRT train will also not move if any of the doors of the train fails to close properly due to mechanical faults.

"The doors will also not close if anything is caught between the doors like a commuter's clothing or bag slings.

"And because compressed air is used, the doors of the LRT train cannot be opened by commuters from the inside, these two aspects ensures their safety," said Zainal.

He said the trains also have an anti-collision warning device.

Zainal said city residents should take pride in the

Star's LRT network.

"As of July 10, we have touched the 29 million passengers mark.

"We are proud that the LRT network was built well within the budgeted cost of RM3.5 billion.

"The whole network is also expected to be fully operational by the end of this year, which is according to schedule too," said Zainal.

He said LRT commuters had many reasons to be proud of themselves too.

"Most of the time, commuters adhered to the no eating, drinking, smoking and littering ruling in the LRT platform and trains.

"This has made our train and platform cleaning job much easier.

"There is also a greater sense of awareness about their responsibility and civic consciousness towards the use of public transport," said Zainal.