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LRT test runs to Commonwealth Games Village in full swing

IN PREPARATION for the opening of the STAR-LRT Phase II route to Sri Petaling (Commonwealth Games Village) in July, STAR-LRT has started carrying out test runs on the system.

Testing and commissioning of the LRTs have commenced full swing since last week to the STAR-LRT Phase II route to the Games Village, according to the company's statement yesterday.

This includes training of STAR personnel, safety, technical and complete operations simulation of the system before STAR-LRT opens its service to the public in July before the Games in September.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to officially launch the service and the Bukit Jalil Sports Complex on July 11.

"For Phase II, all STAR-LRT trains are converted from the present 2-vehicle configuration to a 3-vehicle configuration. This will make the trains considerably longer, and as such, the stopping position of the train on the platform will be changed.

"As there will be a period where both two- and three-vehicle trains will be in operations, all trains will stop at the furthest end of the platform," it said.

Trains which are extended from the 2-vehicle train to 3-vehicle will also increase the capacity to 1,200 passengers.

The line has been constructed to cater to a maximum demand of up to 24,000 passengers an hour per direction.

STAR-LRT Phase II test trains will be operating on the Phase I line between Ampang and Sultan Ismail. These test trains will be running between the normal Phase I trains, it added.

Large "Test Train" signs will be placed on the windscreens of the LRTs and customers are requested to look for these signs and not attempt to board these trains.

"All stations for Phase II will be equipped with a new public address system. Those stations where customers have a choice of destinations will be equipped with a destination display that shows the destination where the next train will be arriving.

"Customers are advised that there will be testing of the new public address system and to ignore the destinations displayed on the indicators during the trial period," the statement said.

To facilitate and provide convenience to customers, the STAR-LRT automatic fare collection equipment will be upgraded.

All STAR-LRT stations will be equipped with ticket machines. The machines only sell single-trip tickets and will accept coins only until note acceptors are fitted in August.

While these machines will not be fully operational until July, STAR-LRT will be carrying out some tests and customers may be asked to assist by purchasing single-trip tickets from the machines.

"Customers can expect the comfort, fast, reliability and predictability of the STAR-LRT system. Journey time from Sultan Ismail Station (City Centre) to Sri Petaling Station takes only 24 minutes," it said.

The company also said that trains will initially operate every 54 minutes during the peak hours and every 8 minutes during off the peak. This will be improved if demand is high.

During the Commonwealth Games, the frequency of trains will be increased to match the expected high demand. During the Games' opening and closing

ceremonies, trains will operate at every 3 minutes.

"A single-trip fare from Sultan Ismail to Sri Petaling is RM2.90. To regular users, there is a 5 per cent or 10 per cent discount for commuters who use a Stored Value Ticket.

"To provide convenience for those commuters who want to take a return trip, STAR-LRT will introduce the return-trip ticket which is twice the normal-single trip fare," it said.

It will also introduce RM20 and RM450 concession Stored Value Tickets which will give a discount of 50 per cent off the normal single-trip fare.

This is introduced for children between the ages of 6 and 12 and school-going children in uniforms. There will also be a rounding up of fares to the nearest ten.

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