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MRT SBK Line takes 160,000 vehicles off the road, says Najib

KUALA LUMPUR: The Mass Rapid Transit Sungai Buloh-Kajang (SBK) Line offers a sustainable travel mode that will benefit consumers and the environment in many ways.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the MRT SBK Line would take 160,000 vehicles off the road, translating to a reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission by 752,000 tonnes annually.

"When the MRT3 or MRT Circle Line is ready by 2027, we will see a fully integrated public transportation system in Kuala Lumpur. That's our dream. Based on track record, we (the government) can achieve this objective," he said in his speech at the MRT Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) station here yesterday, to loud cheers from the audience.

He said the MRT3 project, upon completion, would take 700,000 cars off the road and, in turn, save 3.3 million tonnes in CO₂ emission.

Najib added that the MRT SBK Line would benefit some 1.2 million people, and save time and cost of travelling, hence increasing productivity.

"I still remember when I assumed office in 2009 as the country's prime minister, one of my earliest decisions was to identify the people's needs. I wanted to know their heart's content.

"Hence, we (the government) did a study via the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) and carried out detailed observation (on the people).

"Following that, the need for a modern, efficient and reliable public transportation system for Malaysians, especially in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur, was set as one of the National Key Result Areas."

This, Najib said, was a crucial step to prevent the country from experiencing a similar fate as other nations, where people spent eight to 10 hours on the road due to traffic congestion and gridlock.

Kuala Lumpur, he said, was seeing signs of such massive congestion, especially during the rainy season, and the govern-

ment had to act on it sooner.

The answer to the problem, Najib said, was the MRT for commuters in the Klang Valley.

"Alhamdulillah, the impact (of the MRT project) is big, such as in terms of travelling cost and time.

"For instance, I was told it takes about two hours and 30 minutes (to travel by bus) from Sungai Buloh to Kajang. That is five hours back and forth, whereas it only takes 88 minutes via the MRT, one way.

"While it would cost RM54 if one takes an Uber ride from Sungai Buloh to Kajang, an MRT ride costs only RM6.40 (if paid) in cash and RM5.50 for Touch 'n Go users."

Najib said the project saw the creation of job opportunities, where Phase One of the MRT SBK Line saw 130,000 people employed and the opening of 41 retail outlets at 31 stations along the line.

"We will add more (outlets) in the future. Also, some have said the transport system may also see a boom to satay sellers in Kajang.

"These (positive impacts), thanks to the dynamic transport system, will see a boost in the economy."

Najib added that the MRT SBK Line would integrate with other rail lines like KTM Komuter, light rail transit Ampang and Kelana Jaya lines and monorail, allowing commuters to travel easily between the city's existing urban rail lines.

Phase One of the MRT SBK Line, from Sungai Buloh to Semantan involving 12 stations, has been in operation since Dec 16 last year. Phase Two, from the Semantan station to Kajang station, includes a 9.5km underground section and a 20.5km elevated stretch.

The 19 stations in Phase Two include Muzium Negara, Pasar Seni, Merdeka, Bukit Bintang, TRX, Cochrane, Maluri, Taman Pertama, Taman Midah, Taman Mutiara, Taman Connaught, Taman Suntex, Sri Raya, Bandar Tun Hussein Onn, Batu Sebelas Cheras, Bukit Dukung, Sungai Jernih, Stadium Kajang and Kajang.

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DATUK SERI NAJIB RAZAK

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