

**Putrajaya puts MRT under new project owners**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 18 — The Najib administration has now put the Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) under a new company from September 1, taking it away from another government unit, Syarikat Prasarana Negara Bhd.

A government statement today said the Cabinet approved the setting up of the new owner, MRT Co, under the Ministry of Finance Incorporated.

"MRT Co will assume these roles from Syarikat Prasarana Negara Berhad (Prasarana) with effect from 1 September 2011.

"The Government is also expected to appoint a Malaysian citizen as the chief executive officer of MRT Co at a later date," according to a statement issued by Pemandu, the government efficiency unit.

It quoted Prime Minister Datuk Sri Najib Razak as saying the government is fully committed to the timely and cost effective delivery of the Klang Valley MRT project.

"In handling a project of this size and complexity, undivided focus and clarity in terms of project governance is of utmost priority. Ideally, and as we have heard from the public many times, having an efficient transport system in Klang Valley is extremely critical.

"The Cabinet felt that it was necessary to have a dedicated unit focused solely on ensuring that our country's biggest ever infrastructure is implemented with undivided attention to detail, smoothly and effectively, while maintaining transparent governance throughout the process," he added.

Pemandu said MRT Co will have a project management and technical team comprising experts in mass rail projects and will include expertise seconded from the current Prasarana MRT team.

It added the team's scope of responsibility involves project monitoring and tracking of the construction of all elevated structures, stations, depots as well as underground works, including tunneling and stations.

"It will also be responsible for the commercial aspects of the project, covering contracts, procurement and dispute resolution as well as ensuring quality of delivery in terms of cost, scheduling and Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) requirements.

"MRT Co's project management and technical team will be led by Marcus Levon Karakashian, who has been involved in the implementation of major rail projects over the past thirty years," Pemandu said.

Projects Karakashian has handled include, amongst others, Singapore MRT's Downtown, Northeast and East-West Lines as well as London's Jubilee Line extension. Karakashian will report to the chief executive officer of MRT Co.," it added.

Pemandu said MRT Co's immediate and critical priority is to focus on ensuring the smooth implementation of the Sungai Buloh-Kajang Line.

"Stakeholder engagements will also be a priority for MRT Co as it strives to deliver Malaysia's first KVMRT line on schedule, taking into account the interests of the nation, and the community at large, it said.

The other parties involved in the KVMRT project are the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD), as the supervising agency, and MMC-Gamuda, as PDP.

Pemandu said when the project is completed, the operator of the KVMRT will still be RapidKL, a subsidiary of Prasarana.

"As such, Prasarana will continue to play a critical role in the project, as its input and feedback during the construction phases will be beneficial to the eventual operations of the KVMRT.

"As the Government supervising agency for the KVMRT project, SPAD's role is to fulfil its ultimate objective of providing Klang Valley residents with a comfortable, efficient and integrated public transport system," it said.

Pemandu also said MMC-Gamuda will still serve as PDP to the KVMRT project.

"With the incorporation of MRT Co, Prasarana will now be able to give undivided attention to its role of fulfilling an efficient and reliable public transportation service for the Klang Valley.

Among the immediate tasks for Prasarana will be to focus on improving the current LRT service and line expansion projects, expanding Monorail capacity, improving existing bus services on high demand and congested routes, and ultimately achieving profitability in the near future," it added.

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