

**First Phase Construction Of Sungai Buloh-Semantan MRT According To Schedule –
Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4 (Bernama) -- The first phase construction of the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project can be completed according to the original schedule at the end of 2016.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the implementation of the first phase of the Route 1 Sungai Buloh-Kajang beginning from the Sungai Buloh station to Semantan station was expected to cost below RM23 billion, meeting the budget stipulated.

The first MRT route (Sungai Buloh-Kajang) involved two phases, that is, Sungai Buloh to Semantan (phase one) and Semantan to Kajang (phase two). The 51-kilometre project with 31 transit stations also passed through the Kuala Lumpur city centre.

He said the problems faced previously in implementing the project, could mostly be resolved amicably, especially concerning land acquisition.

Najib disclosed this to reporters after visiting the construction site for the Cochrane underground MRT station, here Friday.

Also present were Mass Rapid Transit Corporation Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) chief executive officer Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid, Underground-Tunnel Director Blaise Mark Pearce, and MRT Corp chairman Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan.

The Prime Minister said generally, the reaction of the people towards the project had been increasingly positive because they perceived that the project not only helped the residents of Kuala Lumpur in terms of public transportation, but also in raising the land value significantly especially in areas where the MRT stations were located.

"With the implementation of the MRT project, new business opportunities would be provided while placing the image of Kuala Lumpur on par with the major cities of the world," he said.

Najib said that the second phase from the Semantan station to Kajang was expected to be ready at the end of July 2017, as scheduled.

He said that after the implementation of the two phases, the government would make a decision whether to continue the project.

"So far, we find the experience gained had been very positive and we could see how the big and small companies could grab the opportunities available in the project.

"Today alone, I have met so many Malaysian engineers who have the opportunities to participate in the massive project using the latest technology and they might not have been able to gain the experience if this project had not been implemented," he said.

Earlier, the Prime Minister, who arrived at the location at 4.15pm, was given a safety briefing before being taken to the viewing platform to observe the construction status of the whole Sungai Buloh-Kajang track.

Najib was also given a briefing on the importance of the construction location and the activities

carried out at the site.

Meanwhile, in a statement, Azhar said the first phase of the track from Sungai Buloh to the Semantan station would begin operations at the end of 2016.

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