

PRIME NEWS

RM250m upgrade for LRT line

NST

16/9/16

MLS 8

POWER SUBSTATIONS: Work will begin as early as next week, says Prasarana



AMIR HISYAM RASID

KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

PRASARANA Malaysia Bhd will spend RM250 million to upgrade the ageing infrastructure of power substations on the Light Rail Transit (LRT) line, which is believed to be the cause of service disruptions last week.

Last Wednesday and Friday, hundreds of commuters were stranded on their way to work due to LRT power breakdowns.

On Friday, commuters were forced to walk along the tracks during the evacuation by Prasarana supervisors.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had instructed Prasarana to make public its findings of the investigations into the breakdowns.

He had also instructed Prasarana to appoint an independent technical assessor in the upgrading work, and the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) will participate in the audit to ensure compliance.

Prasarana group chief executive officer Datuk Azmi Abdul Aziz said the work would start as early as next week and was expected to be completed by year-end.

"We are exploring new initiatives to enhance the LRT and monorail services in the country.

"An assessment of the system and the appointment of an independent technical assessor will be carried out for the upgrading of the power sub-

stations.

"The lifecycle of a cable is generally 20 years, and the current cables have exceeded 18 years and are approaching their end of lifecycle.

"We will speed up our efforts to prevent another power outage," he said at a press conference here yesterday.

"We have identified the root cause (of the service disruption). Our immediate response would be to identify cables that need replacing. We are working in the best interest of the people," he added.

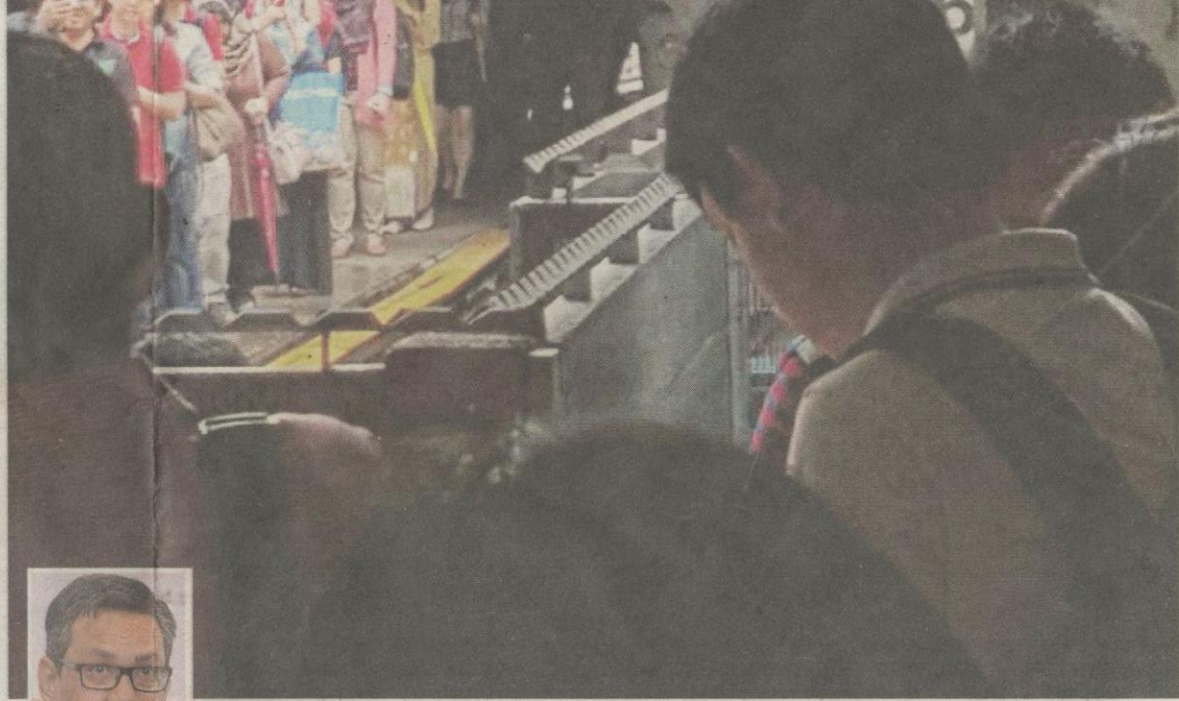
The press conference follows Prasarana's second meeting with Najib to discuss initiatives to enhance public transportation.

Azmi said Prasarana would make amendments to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for safety to deliver better customer service.

"Our SOPs' focus would be on safety. Whatever we do, we will not compromise on customers' safety."

He said Prasarana was offering a 50 per cent discount for travel from 6am to 7am to encourage commuters to travel ahead of peak hours on weekdays on the LRT, monorail and Bus Rapid Transit-Sunway Line.

"Under the initiative, which commences tomorrow (today), to ease congestion in trains and stations, a discount of 50 per cent on fares will be extended to commuters who tap in before 7am via the cashless payment modes. In allowing com-



Commuters walking on the tracks at the Setiawangsa LRT station following a power outage on Friday. (Inset) Prasarana Malaysia Bhd group chief executive officer Datuk Azmi Abdul Aziz says upgrading work on the LRT line's power substation was expected to be completed by year-end.

muters to fully optimise the one-hour window, they will be allowed to enter the stations as early as 5.50am."

Earlier yesterday, SPAD announced that it had directed Prasarana to come up with proactive problem detection measures as well as a preventive maintenance system to ensure the rail network's power supply and maintenance ran smoothly.

SPAD, in a statement, said it had

instructed Prasarana to allocate maximum effort and resources to upgrade 15 power substations along the Kelana Jaya Line.

The commission said it required Prasarana to conduct and submit a detailed risk and trend analysis as well as an improvement plan with specific timelines to arrest and reverse technical faults.

"This entails periodic monitoring reports that track key indicators so

that early detection of problems and timely preventive actions can occur," it said.

Prasarana is expected to review and improve its existing SOP for Safety and Evacuation Plans under SPAD's monitoring.

"As a first step, SPAD has instructed Prasarana that during passenger evacuation procedures, no trains should operate along the affected stretch."