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MRT — More than just about commuting

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PETALING JAYA — Nelson Tse has been anticipating the opening of the Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line One on Friday, because it would mean a wider array of choices for lunch.

The 24-year-old graphic designer said he could not wait to take advantage of the long-awaited facility, especially since there were limited restaurants and cafes where he worked.

“Some days there will be food trucks in the area, but it depends on the weather. Apart from that there is just one fast food franchise and a mamak stall down the road. It would be nice to have options,” he said.

Come Friday, a train ride from the Semantan station to the Mutiara Damansara station, where shopping complexes like The Curve, Ikano Power Centre, One Utama and Ikea are located, will only take 15 minutes.

Phase One of the project connects Sungai Buloh to Semantan.

Insurance agent, Siti Hajar Hashim, 29, echoed Tse’s sentiment, adding she and her colleagues had been planning to satisfy their cravings for Ikea’s best-selling menu as soon as the MRT starts operations.

“We get a longer lunch break on Fridays so we were thinking of taking the train to Mutiara Damansara to have Ikea’s meatballs for lunch. Maybe we will do some quick window shopping while we are there. It will de-stress us from work,” she said.

Personal assistant Kang L.C., 55, said working professionals viewed public transportation as a medium which increased their mobility.

“I would rather drive for convenience but I welcome the MRT operations. Business meetings with clients will no longer be limited to the constraints of the office,” she said.

Other working professionals also expressed

their excitement over Phase 2 of the Klang Valley Mass Rapid Transit (KVMRT) to ease their commute to work.

Manager Md Lazim II, 39, who lives in Kajang, said he would rely on the MRT once it is completed as it would save time and convenience.

“I have to leave my house before 6.30am in order to make it to work before 8.30am. I leave the office at about 5.30pm. Even so, I will be stuck in a gridlock for two hours,” he said.

Lazim added that he uses the Grand Saga Expressway and parking fees were subsidised by his company.

“But I still spend about RM700 per month on fuel and toll.”

Accountant T. Thibasheeni, 37, who also resides in Kajang, said her monthly expenditure on transport was high as her company did not provide a parking allowance.

“The open space car park near my office charge between RM4 and RM6 per hour and sometimes I have to pay up to RM40 for one-day parking. Once my car was towed away by City Hall because I parked on the curb to save money on parking fees,” she said.

“So not driving to work would be the best alternative for me and I look forward to use the MRT service,” she said.

Phase 2 of Line 1, which will have 19 stations between Semantan and Kajang, is expected to be up and running in July.

MRT Corp had earlier announced that the stations were completed and in the test-run stage for a period of six months prior to operations.

The company had from Nov 24 to Nov 28 held the “Catch the Train” photo contest on Instagram and Facebook, where 10 winners are invited to attend the launch of the Sungai Buloh to Semantan service by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak tomorrow.

The winners were Fadli Samuri, Mohamad Sazli Mohd Razuki, Wong Han Yu, Lee Hong Tuck, Nik Anis Adlin Zafri, Chong Wei Yung, Wong Jun Ho, Dennis Tay, Nadra Mokhtar and Iq-bal Faiz.



Kang



Lazim



Nelson



120 years



A train approaches a station along the Mutiara Damansara-Semantan line. The SBK Phase One line will be officiated by Najib tomorrow. — Picture by Ahmad Zamzahuri

Prasarana receives international award for quality



KUALA LUMPUR — Prasarana Malaysia Bhd has won the prestigious European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) award for its contributions to the transportation industry and its exemplary management strategies.

Prasarana was honoured with the Quality Choice Prize along other leading global organisations at ESQR's convention and award giving ceremony in Berlin on Monday.

Its president and group chief executive officer Datuk Seri Azmi Abdul Aziz, who received the award, said it was testament to the brilliant minds, creative skills, tireless efforts and solid dedication of every member of the company and its subsidiaries.

"The award endorses all management initiatives by Prasarana and its subsidiaries in transforming the group, especially with the fresh mandate given by the government, and its key partners to take the country's public transport system to a world-class standard," he said.

"In receiving, this award, I must thank and congratulate the Malaysian government for their firm belief that the future for the country's prosperity and progress is through the

government's Transformation Plan, which forms the basis of our own transformation plan."

Azmi, who took over the leadership of Prasarana in January last year, had reshaped the management strategy of the group by immediately establishing a special transformation task force that evaluated the entire process within Prasarana and its subsidiaries before putting forward recommendations to yield greater revenue and productivity.

The task force, which had proven its effectiveness, works closely with Azmi's office and has now been promoted to a full-fledged division led by a transformation chief and supported by a team of young social-media savvy executives.

In taking Prasarana to new heights, Azmi initiated various collaborations with international partners and rail operators to form win-win collaborations in terms of sharing expertise and knowledge, generating bigger revenue, and enhancing skills and technical capabilities.

Azmi was accorded the highest award on skills training and named recipient of the Prime Minister's Award (Tokoh Mahir), in conjunction with National Workers Day 2016.