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# LRT3 to generate 21% EIRR upon completion, says Prasarana

*Construction work on RM9b line scheduled to begin in early 2017 and completion slated by Aug 31, 2020*

by **PREMALATHA JAYARAMAN**

THE Light Rail Transit 3 (LRT3), which is expected to benefit about two million commuters, is projected to generate an economic internal rate of return (EIRR) of 21% upon its completion.

Prasarana Malaysia Bhd president and CEO Datuk Azmi Abdul Aziz said the EIRR is about economic benefits and, as such, the public transport infrastructure project is not much about financial returns.

"If we were to look at financial returns, we would have to charge higher fares because the cost of building the infrastructure is very high," he said after the launch of LRT3 that was officiated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak in Shah Alam yesterday.

Azmi said Prasarana looks at the project from an economic benefits point of view, in terms of job opportunities and the rate of economic growth that it brings, and in the long run, how it will contribute to the country's gross domestic product.

He said the 37km-long rail alignment will provide accessi-

bility to commuters in Klang, Shah Alam and Petaling Jaya. It will also integrate five of its stations to existing and new transportation networks.

The LRT3 will be able to transport more passengers compared to other modes of transportation available in Western Klang Valley at the rate of 36,720 passengers per direction per hour.

He said construction work on the line is scheduled to begin in early 2017 and expected to be completed by Aug 31, 2020, with a capped cost of RM9 billion.

The LRT3 project is owned by Prasarana, which also owns and manages the current LRT and monorail networks as well as bus services in the Klang Valley, Penang and Kuantan.

Prasarana chairman Tan Sri Ismail Adam said a joint-venture company, MRCB George Kent Sdn Bhd, has been appointed as the project delivery partner (PDP) for the LRT3 alignment in September 2015.

He said the pre-qualification

stage of competitive tendering was completed in May 2016, resulting in 96 of the 124 tenderers shortlisted.

Meanwhile, Najib said the LRT3 must reach world standards. Its safety standards must also not be compromised.

Spanning 37km with 26 stations between Klang and Bandar Utama, he said the LRT3 is set to benefit an estimated two million people in the Western Corridor of Greater Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley upon its completion in 2020.

"With the addition of the LRT3 under the urban rail development plan, I am confident that we can create a public transport system that is competent, efficient, integrated and sustainable, while simultaneously raising the socio-economic levels in Malaysia and

promoting a better quality of life for the rakyat," he said in his keynote address.

To ensure convenience and connectivity for the community, Najib said the LRT3 will be complemented by a feeder

bus system serving the areas in close proximity to the alignment. He said the feeder bus system is vital as it serves and covers wider catchment areas beyond walking distance to all the stations.

Meanwhile, 10 of the LRT3 stations will be attached with "park and ride" facilities to encourage more Malaysians to leave their cars at the facilities instead of entering the city centre, providing them a more convenient, cost-friendly and reliable journey with LRT3.

Najib also announced that commuters travelling on Rapid KL, LRT and monorail networks would be accorded a 50% discount between 6am and 7am daily starting from Sept 16. He said this will benefit more than 500,000 commuters who use the services daily.

"I am certain that this will contribute to easing the congestion at peak hours on the LRT and monorail lines as commuters can take advantage of this early bird discount for coming out earlier," he added.

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*Pic by Muhd Amin Naharul*

**(From left, front row) Minister of Transport Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Azmi, Najib, Ismail and Selangor Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Mohd Azmin Ali looking at the diorama of the new LRT3 line at the launch in Shah Alam yesterday**