

Headline	What's in store for MRT3		
MediaTitle	The Star		
Date	03 Jun 2017	Language	English
Circulation	338,368	Readership	1,032,000
Section	Letters	Page No	32
ArticleSize	361 cm ²	Journalist	N/A
PR Value	RM 54,713		



What's in store for MRT3?

MOST of my past letters have been on existing rail transportation issues but in this one, I am driven to discuss our forthcoming MRT3 also known as Circle Line.

It was reported in 2016 that MRT3 would be fully underground and that the detailed announcement and public display would be in the next quarter. However, where this line exactly serves remains a big mystery.

I've chosen to write about the MRT3 alignment prior to the announcement or public display for a few reasons. First, the current scheme is lacking alternatives.

There should be at least three proposals of alignments, and in each alignment, two proposals of station locations before it goes for debate and discussion. Second, as happened previously, public display can create objections because of the Nimby (Not-In-My-Back-Yard) syndrome, despite it being the best option. Thirdly, it might be all too late then to propose something, after much work and commitment have been accomplished.

A quick search on the Internet shows up four variations of the MRT3 alignment. I am referring to the MRT3 map on Wikipedia as Wikipedia information is normally regarded as second to the official.

The northern section of MRT3 is good as a primary line for transferring passengers to MRT/LRT/KTM lines heading towards the city centre. New stations are planned for the line at Matrade/Jln Sultan Hj Ahmad Shah junction, Genting Klang South, Setapak, Semarak and Datuk Keramat before it connects with the LRT Jelatek station.

PJ is so dense that it is impossible to build big highways unlike KL or other areas in Klang Valley. This is where an underground MRT is best suited.

The eastern portion, which is supposed to have seven to eight stations starting from Berembang to Kg Cheras Baru, is expected to be a great section because it passes through the low-medium demographics. Second, it connects thoroughly with both LRT lines and MRT1. The average waiting time for a LRT/MRT train is only one to two minutes, giving a smooth and seamless transfer.

After the Taman Midah interchange station, is the southern section with only three new stations proposed at Bdr Sri Permaisuri, Bdr Malaysia South and Taman Desa. Three more should be added at HUKM, Jln Kuchai Lama and Jln Gembira OUG before turning north to the western portion.

This last section does not make sense. The Klang Valley MRT project is not just for KL. It has missed all the stations that would be required in PJ and it runs so close to KL Sentral and LRT KJ and KTM Komuter lines. Klang Valley is so big, why cramp so many lines and

changing stations in a small area? It is KTM/LRT that should be adding stations for new development and demand. Third, it also appears to run through the high-end residential area of Bangsar with a high ownership of cars.

The western portion should start with an interchange at KTM Petaling followed by stations in Jln Othman, PJ New Town, interchanging with LRT & BRT Asia Jaya, Jln Semangat/SS14, SS2/Sea Park, Damansara Intan/Jaya, interchanging with TTDI or BU stations before proceeding to TTDI Sentral (optional), Sri Hartamas, Mont Kiara and back to Jln Duta.

The exact station location is equally important but it is impossible to elaborate here.

PJ is often underestimated. When private companies built the two LRT lines in the 90s, they envisaged and executed for a bigger capacity train for the Ampang (KL) line and smaller capacity train for Kelana Jaya (PJ). Sadly, they were wrong. The PJ/KJ line ridership is much greater despite the alignment using the TNB electrical grid. Many other instances exist. One should notice that PJ is so dense that it is impossible to build big highways unlike KL or other areas in Klang Valley. This is where an underground MRT is best suited.

Unfortunately, this proposal will exclude UM for other important catchments in PJ. MRT Corp should consider tweaking the MRT1 alignment to reach UM while the existing track can be used as a mini-depot to store reserved trains.

MRT3 is the most critical because it is the last line under our belt.

Decentralisation, industrialisation and new townships from the 90s have created huge transportation demands outside the city centre.

Other capitals in developed countries including Singapore have between three to five circle lines, including a combination of several lines to form a circular interlink.

The MRT3 does not need to be a nice rounded loop. It can be extended to form a secondary circle line or extended to be a radial line to offer a new entrance and relieve the LRT congestion to the city centre while creating new stations in downtown KL. Singapore's Circle Line is 'Q' in shape and London's is a '6'.

The onus to design the most promising MRT3 line is now on MRT Corp and SPAD. Incorporating various proposals and with critical thinking, one can expect MRT3 to open with a standing ovation, that is, with a crowd of standing passengers upon commencement of operations.

**M.A.B.A. @ AZMI
Kuala Lumpur**



**your
opinions**

EMAIL editor@thestar.com.my
MAIL The Editor,
Menara Star, 15,
Jalan 16/11, Section 16,
46350 Petaling Jaya.
Letters must carry the sender's full name, address and telephone number. A pseudonym may be included.