

# Big relief for commuters

## They welcome reopening of Masjid Jamek-Bandaraya LRT route

By GERARD GIMINO

gerard.gimino@thestar.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Commuters of the Ampang LRT line, specifically those needing to reach Masjid Jamek from Bandaraya and vice versa, heaved a sigh of relief with the reopening of the stretch after more than a year.

Over the weekend, many seized the opportunity to head towards parts of the city centre here after learning the route reopened at 6am yesterday.

Private sector worker Hayzurina Kasim said she planned her family outing specifically for yesterday after finding out the route had reopened.

"We did plan to come to this part of the city previously, but held back plans due to the transit involving feeder buses.

"So, when we heard the track reopened today (yesterday), we made the decision to come. It's very convenient since we're travelling in a big group as well," she said when met at the Bandaraya station.

Letchumanan Karuppan, 47, and his wife Malar Maniam, 41, felt the full resumption of service was way more convenient than having to use the bridging shuttle buses.

"It's time saving, and there's no hassle. We don't have to wait for the buses as well.

"Its more convenient as we can reach directly from our place in Puchong," said the couple who came together with their family.

Procurement executive Eblene Crezer, 27, and fashion executive Esther Ezrine, 25, said reopening of the route made travel much smoother.

"We come here often, and previously had to use the feeder bus to reach Bandaraya.

"The transit was tedious as we had to wait for the bus (at an outdoor bus stop), and the weather was also another question.

"There was also the issue of traffic congestion whenever transiting across stations," said the duo who travelled from Bukit Jalil.



**Good news:** A woman walking past a notice announcing the reopening of the stretch. — AINA AMIRAH/The Star

Students Ammar Firdaus Abdullah, 21, and Uzma Batrisyia, 20, shared a similar sentiment.

"Taking the train is comfortable and there's no need to find parking or face jams," they said.

The stretch between the Bandaraya and Masjid Jamek stations on the Ampang line was closed for rectification on Jan 27, 2023 after cracks and structural movements were detected on at least one of the piers supporting the elevated line.

After a walkabout at Bandaraya here yesterday, Transport Minister Anthony Loke said Prasarana Malaysia, the owner of the LRT assets, would claim compensation amounting to RM38mil from the developer of a construction project near the Bandaraya station.

"This includes repair costs, and costs borne by Prasarana to prepare feeder buses between stations," he said, adding that structural damages to the track were confirmed to have occurred due to ground movements from the nearby con-

struction work.

Loke said prior instructions from the ministry were to carry out repair works first, and claim compensation later.

"If we did it vice versa, we would have to bear more disruptions," he said.

While approvals for constructions and developments were given by local authorities, Loke said the Land Public Transport Agency (Apad) and Prasarana must be consulted if works were within a distance of 250m from stations.

"We have also been made to understand that the construction works near the Bandaraya station began even before approval was given by Prasarana or Apad.

"Hence, we hope for cooperation by all local authorities.

"The conditions (for construction) are there and I am not blaming the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) in this matter, but the developer did not abide by this," Loke said, adding that whether the suspended construction work resumes is under DBKL's jurisdiction.