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Singapore Government

**PRESS RELEASE**

Information Division, Ministry of Communications &amp; Information, 36th Storey, PSA Building, 480 Alexandra Road, Singapore 0511. Tel: 2799794/5

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**SPEECH BY DR YEO NING HONG, MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS &  
INFORMATION AND SECOND MINISTER FOR DEFENCE (POLICY),  
AT THE OPENING OF SECTION 8 OF THE MRT SYSTEM  
AT THE BUKIT GOMBAK STATION  
ON SATURDAY, 10 MARCH 1990 AT 9.00 AM**

Today's opening of the Bukit Line brings the MRT to another 200,000 Singaporeans, living in the Bukit Batok, Bukit Gombak, and Choa Chu Kang New Towns and their vicinities. Travelling to city will be faster, more convenient, and more comfortable. With this opening, we take another small step to improve the quality of life for our people.

The SMRT together with SBS and TIBS are upgrading the quality of public transport, for the benefit of commuters. They have formed a company, Transit Link, to do this on a systematic and continuous basis. Transit Link is presently pilot testing specially designed equipment on buses to accept a common MRT/bus ticket. So far, the response has been very positive. An average of 8,000-9,000 passengers use such tickets everyday. They find it easy to use and especially convenient for those who travel on both bus and MRT. Transit Link is also looking at the travel pattern of commuters to see how bus routes can be planned to better serve the public, with minimum transfers for the maximum number of commuters. This means better feeder services from HDB estates to MRT stations. Community leaders in CCC's and RC's are welcomed to provide suggestions to Transit Link about the needs of their residents. Best of all, if community leaders can have regular dialogues with Transit Link, and can work together to conduct surveys, then the bus companies can develop the most convenient routes for feeder services for the benefit of all.

The Bukit line will operate as a separate service, similar to the North-South line, linking the main East-West line of the MRT. The alternative is a split line with alternate trains, one serving Chinese Garden, Lakeside and Boon Lay, and the next serving the Bukit line. The separate service was chosen even though it will cost SMRT \$750,000 more a year to operate. However, passengers will benefit with faster train service and greater reliability. This is an example of how the transport operators are going all the way to provide quality service.

For the past 16 months, there has been much discussion on land transport policies. Amidst all the different points of views that were voiced during these discussions, one conclusion stands out because of its overwhelming unanimity: that is, a comfortable, reliable and efficient public transport system is the best answer to all our road congestion problems. We will all have to work harder to further improve our public transport system to meet our people's expectation.

On this note, I wish to thank everyone who had contributed to making today's event a success.

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