

Put it on the right track before taking things further

I AM a frequent user of KTM Komuter.

While I am grateful that KTM is providing affordable travelling, it is disappointing to note that its services have hardly improved over the past 10 years.

KTM Komuter is notorious for being late. Technical problems are always the cause, it seems.

What has the management done for the past 10 years since such problems keep recurring?

Secondly, cancellations have become a norm, too. And, commuters are informed only minutes before a train is scheduled to arrive.

This makes it difficult to plan our journey.

Thirdly, KTM Komuter is packed during peak hours, possibly due to its failure to stick to its schedule.

When people cannot wait any longer they squeeze into an already crowded train. This makes the journey extremely uncomfortable.

Packed to the brim, the question of hygiene comes to mind. It is difficult to avoid sneezing into another person's face. How then can we curb the spread of the A(H1N1)?

Some who have given up hope on the KTM Komuter have decided to drive their own cars. Others use it because the service is cheaper.

Needless to say, KTM Komuter is definitely not suitable for those who observe punctuality. Imagine doctors, lawyers and businessmen having to depend on the KTM Komuter to conduct their daily work.

With the Government trying to promote better use of public transport to reduce road congestions and pollution, much more should be done to improve the KTM Komuter services.

KTMB has plans to extend its services to many more areas within the Klang Valley. Based on its track records, I am doubtful of its ability to do this.

Sometimes, it hurts more to give false hope than not to give any at all.

Commuters will be glad to see KTMB attend to the needs of its existing networks before investing on an expansion.

**KK LIM,
Kuala Lumpur.**

FEEDBACK

Dear Sir/Madam,

REPLY TO READER'S ARTICLE IN THE STAR AND THE STAR ONLINE ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2009

We refer to an article by KK Lim, Kuala Lumpur (Put it on the right track before taking things further) which was published in The Star column both in the print (page 45) and online versions on September 28, 2009.

We would like to thank the writer for their feedback and for using the KTM Komuter service.

KTM Berhad is aware of the public grouse on the KTM Komuter delays and would like to assure our passengers that we are constantly and proactively exploring all possible avenues to resolve the delays.

The KTM Komuter sets currently in operation are 14 years old, in average, and in need of a major overhaul. While this overhaul project is being carried out at the moment, KTM Komuter is operating optimally where all functioning sets are being utilized to their maximum potential. However, the number of available sets in operation today could not fulfill the demand of transporting nearly 100,000 people daily.

Despite the challenges and limitations, KTM Berhad has taken various measures to ensure service reliability and availability.

As of this year, KTM Berhad has taken several drastic and out-of-the-box measures which include the usage of intercity coaches to transport passengers during peak hours between Seremban and Rawang, starting March 17.

Beginning May this year, KTM Berhad has also introduced the Hybrid KTM Komuter train, where KTM Komuter train sets that function well but are still awaiting propulsion system equipments from overseas were hauled using normal diesel locomotives. There are seven KTM Komuter Hybrid trains now in operation, ferrying passengers at high density stations for both the Seremban & Rawang and Sentul & Pelabuhan Klang routes.

We are also in the midst of putting together an on-call technical assistance team to provide on-the-spot technical support in case of minor failures so passengers do not have to disembark and board another train.

We will shortly be engaging the refurbishment contractor to fix all the problems related to the refurbishment exercise. With this approach, we believe it will improve the availability and reliability of the KTM Komuter trains.

In the meantime, we are also reviewing the train time table to cater for the two most demanding routes ie. between Kajang and Sg. Buloh and between Sentul and Shah Alam to provide higher frequencies during the 6.00 am to 9.00 am morning peak and the 5.00 pm to 8.00 pm evening peak.

We will also shortly be rescheduling the Intercity time table in order to provide extra capacity for the KTM Komuter service during the above peak periods and we plan to roll this out by 15 October 2009.

We would like to reassure all KTM Komuters that we are constantly monitoring the feedback from you and endeavour to rectify the problems raised immediately.

Thank you.

***Sincerely,
Dr Aminuddin Adnan
President
KERETAPI TANAH MELAYU BERHAD***