

## For Immediate Release

Press Release

16 December 2024

### Sarawak Metro's ART project an inspiration for Japan's 'Fuji Tram'

**KUCHING:** The news last month about Japan's Yamanashi Prefectural government's plans to use a hydrogen powered trackless tram to shuttle tourists to Mount Fuji is yet another indication of how Sarawak's adoption of the Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) is attracting greater global attention.

According to Sarawak Metro Sdn Bhd chief executive officer, Ts. Mazli Mustafa, a small team from the Yamanashi Prefectural government had visited Kuching several months ago to learn more about the Kuching Urban Transportation System (KUTS) project.

"Our KUTS project team were able to provide valuable insights to the team from Yamanashi Prefecture and I believe this has in one way or another inspired the decision by the prefecture to look into adopting the ART system.

"In a way, we are also humbled to hear about this latest development, as it is a vindication of the work that our team is doing here in Kuching to transform the public transport system," said Mazli in a statement.

He added that Sarawak Metro is looking forward to further assisting the team Yamanashi Prefecture in enhancing its ART system to suit its specific needs.

"The news has also definitely been a big morale booster for our KUTS project team, especially when we saw our prototype ART hydrogen vehicle being featured when the announcement was made in Japan," said Mazli.

According to several local Japanese news outlets, Yamanashi governor Kotaro Nagasaki told a press conference in late November that the prefecture planned to use a hydrogen-powered "trackless tram" to shuttle tourists to and from the foot of Mount Fuji.

The news outlets also reported that the "Fuji Tram option would significantly reduce construction costs, while still allowing the authorities to control climate-damaging overcrowding during the summer season at the highest mountain in Japan."

Media reports also quoted the Yamanashi governor explaining that the hydrogen-powered trams are expected to have two couplings and a capacity of up to 120 passengers.

He added that while the ART system designed by China's CRRC was being considered for the service, priority would be given to Japanese companies producing similar hydrogen-powered vehicles.

**Ends**

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**Photo:**

Fuji Tram press conference



**Caption:**

Yamanashi governor Kotaro Nagasaki at the press conference announcing plans for the 'Fuji Tram'

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## About Sarawak Metro and KUTS project:

Sarawak Metro Sdn Bhd (Sarawak Metro), a wholly owned subsidiary of Sarawak Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), has been entrusted by the Sarawak Government to modernise public transport through the Kuching Urban Transportation System (KUTS) project.

Sarawak Metro has been entrusted to implement, operate and maintain the KUTS project.

The project is being developed in phases, and Phase 1 includes the development of three lines: the Blue Line from Rembus in Kota Samarahan to Hikmah Exchange in the city centre; the Red Line, from Kuching Sentral to Pending; and the Green Line, from Pending to Damai.

Construction of the first package for the Blue Line is expected to complete by the fourth quarter of 2025 and all three lines are scheduled to be fully completed by the end of 2027.

The backbone of the KUTS project is the introduction of the zero-emission Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) hydrogen vehicles.

The ART vehicles will be operated on dedicated lanes, meaning they will not share the lane with other road users. The ART hydrogen vehicles will run on rubber tires, and hence the dedicated lanes will be trackless. The lanes will mostly be at-grade (road level) while certain sections of the alignment will be elevated.

The ART operation will be supported by a network of feeder buses, which will also consist of hydrogen-powered vehicles to offer the ‘first mile and last mile’ connectivity for commuters.

The move to use hydrogen is in line with the Sarawak Government’s aspirations to advance the hydrogen economy and to decarbonise public transport in Sarawak.

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