

Trains great way to reduce carbon footprint

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Wan Junaidi (centre) chats with commuters on his MRT ride between the TRX and Sungai Buloh stations. — Picture by Razak Ghazali

KUALA LUMPUR — Using public transport is the best way the people can help the country reduce its carbon footprint, Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said.

Riding on the newly launched Sungai-Buloh-Kajang Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) line yesterday, Wan Junaidi said opting to travel greener by using services like the MRT would have an impact on the environment by reducing pollution and congestion.

He said some regularly congested areas in the city had been positively impacted by the MRT.

“We’ve seen the impact in areas like Bukit Bintang and Jalan Duta, which have been less congested,” he said.

Wan Junaidi said the ministry hoped to

record a 34,000-metric tonne reduction in carbon emissions in the next year with the emergence of the MRT service.

“We hope the public transport service will further contribute to the 33 per cent reduction in carbon emissions we have seen since 2005,” he said.

“In the long term, we hope to reach the goal of a reduction of 300,000 metric tonnes by 2030.

“This is just the beginning and a good indicator of what is to come from the country’s green initiatives. It could be one of the effective ways to reach the target.”

“Of course, it would be ideal to do away completely with non-environmentally friendly emissions, but we must be realistic to set achievable goals.”

Wan Junaidi said the target was

achievable with the additional public transport initiatives.

“We do not pay attention to things like carbon emission every day but it makes a difference in the long run as it affects our quality of life,” he said.

Wan Junaidi expressed hope that by reducing carbon emission, pollution-related health problems could be reduced.

“Illnesses like asthma and cardiovascular problems can be reduced in a better environment where there is cleaner air,” he said.

In addition, the ministry was targeting to table an Act to address sound pollution next year.

“Noise has become a norm in city living but this should not be the case,” he said.

“If everyone uses public transport,

noise pollution will be dramatically reduced, too.

“While it is currently not illegal to make noise, we are looking to table this Act in parliament next year to address the issue.”

Addressing reports of vandalism on the MRT, Wan Junaidi advised commuters to be more responsible.

“The MRT is for everyone and the mindset we can do as we please with public property cannot continue,” he said.

“I’ve even heard reports that the Rukunegara fixture at Merdeka Stadium had been turned into rock-climbing structure by some irresponsible people. They need to divert their attention to actual rock-climbing walls.

“We must take pride in our belongings. It is for others, too.”



WHAT IS CARBON EMISSION?



Carbon emission is the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

It can be broken down into two essential sources — natural and human.

■ Natural sources of emission include decomposition, ocean release and respiration.

■ Human sources arise from activities such as cement production, deforestation, and fossil fuel burning of coal, natural gasses and vehicular fuel, among others.

■ Plants and trees absorb carbon dioxide and turn it into oxygen. However, the emission levels today is much higher than what nature can accommodate.

■ As a result of carbon dioxide trapped in the atmosphere, temperatures rise and air quality is drastically affected.

■ Carbon footprinting refers to the amount of carbon emission one is responsible for.