

# 'No change in MRT alignment'

## Azhar: Project to go on as planned

**PUTRAJAYA:** The alignment of the My Rapid Transit (MRT) project will remain, despite sustained protests against tunnelling works under Chinatown along Jalan Sultan.

MRT Corp chief executive director Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid said property owners had no cause for concern, as not much would be changed above ground.

He said MRT Corp had arranged with the Government to waive compulsory acquisition notices issued to several premises in the area, provided that the owners signed a mutual agreement with the corporation.

However, Azhar said it was vital that both the corporation and property owners negotiated and finalised the agreement quickly because the acquisition grace period had lapsed last year.

"We are very late (in settling negotiations), but the Government has been very patient ... Everything

hinges on the agreement," he said after attending a signing ceremony between MRT Corp and its project partners yesterday.

Azhar said MRT Corp's offer included compensation for loss of income over the six months the property owners would need to vacate their premises and provide them temporary lodging until tunnelling works, scheduled to start in 2014, were completed.

Azhar repeated an assurance that buildings along Jalan Sultan would not be torn down, except for three buildings – including UDA Ocean – on government land to build a station.

Azhar noted that of the 23 property owners affected by the tunnelling works, only three refused to enter negotiations.

"We are trying to oblige (their demands) as much as possible, but we don't see any reason why the residents in the area want to realign the route," he said.