

Preserve heritage site, say groups

> 150 NGOs support efforts to get MRT line realigned

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KUALA LUMPUR: Around 150 non-governmental organisations (NGO) stamped their support for a realignment proposal of the mass railway transit (MRT) line yesterday in efforts to save Jalan Sultan and its cultural heritage.

Jalan Sultan Preservation Committee co-chairman Yong Yew Wei said the committee was

proposing a route through Jalan Tan Cheng Lock and Jalan Pudu instead of Jalan Sultan.

“Having the MRT line through Jalan Sultan would destroy the eco-balance, economic development, tourism and social life associated with the historical road.

“We are proposing to use the underused Plaza Rakyat in Jalan Pudu as an MRT station so that MRT Corp will not have to build another station,” he said in his opening speech to around 200 hawkers, supporters and NGO representatives.

The mass endorsement campaign, organised by the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall (KLSCAH), was a result of unsuccessful attempts to convince MRT Corp to realign the route.

The committee hoped to garner 300 more organisations to support the cause.

KLSCAH president Tan Yew Sing said if more talks with MRT Corp proved unsuccessful, the committee would take the issue to Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Datuk Seri Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib

Abdul Razak.

“Even though MRT Corp chief executive officer Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid said on Feb 10 that they would not realign the route, that’s his opinion and he’s speaking on behalf of MRT Corp.

“We are speaking on behalf of the people; this is a national issue and it is shown in the wide representation of NGOs – they are coming from all over the country and are not just Chinese organisations,” he said.

Khong Kim Lyew, who runs his family’s tailor shop in Jalan Sultan, claimed his family has lived in Jalan Sultan since the 1890s.

“My heart and soul is in Jalan Sultan; five generations of my family lived there. That road has over 100 years of history attached to it.

“This is not only about the preservation of Jalan Sultan, it’s about the cultural heritage of Kuala Lumpur,” he said to loud cheers and applause.

Kuala Lumpur Hawkers and Petty Traders Association vice-president Datuk Ang Say Tee thanked the organisations for their support, and expressed hope that the campaign would result in the route’s realignment.