

No more talks, say landowners

Committee plans to approach PM in bid to realign MRT track in Jalan Sultan

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THE Committee for Preserving Jalan Sultan has given up negotiating with MRT Corp on land acquisition and is now hoping to bring the matter up with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

Kuala Lumpur and Chinese Assembly Hall secretary-general Yong Yew Wei, who represents the committee, said this was because MRT Corp had disrespected the landowners during recent negotiations.

He was referring to MRT Corp CEO Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid's statement on Saturday that only two landowners were hindering the process of reaching a mutual agreement between the company and landowners.

Azhar had also said landowners had until next week to decide on the agreement before compulsory land acquisition took place.

"To our understanding, none of the 21 affected landowners have signed a mutual agreement with MRT Corp," Yong said.

The agreement reportedly states occupants would have to relocate for a maximum

小坡街，维护文化遗产

E JALAN SULTAN

SERVE



PUTTING THEIR FOOT DOWN: Yong (seated, third from left) and Fong (seated, third from right) with other committee members making their stand clear at the conference yesterday

of six months and their land titles endorsed with a statement recognising the existence of the tunnel beneath it under a mutual agreement mooted by MRT Corp, subject to a fitness study by authorities.

Yong criticised Azhar's rejection of a realignment proposal put forward by landowners about six months ago.

"Based on the proposal, the MRT station should be realigned to Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock so it does not affect an area with heritage values like Jalan Sultan,"

he said.

"MRT Corp never discussed the matter with landowners, nor did it explain why it was not accepting the alternative proposal."

He said the landowners, who were disappointed with the way the company handled the negotiations, were planning to seek a meeting with the prime minister.

"The PM had publicly stated the government was willing to listen to possible realignments for the project. Thus, we are going to mobilise a petition and approach him," Yong said.

Bukit Bintang MP Fong Kui Lun called for the sacking of both Azhar and Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar.

"When Parliament reconvenes on March 12, I am going to call for their resignations," he said.

Fong said the MRT issue in Jalan Sultan was not an isolated incident but an issue affecting the public on a grander scale.

"This is about preserving the heritage of the country. It is not about the landowners alone."