

# Owners deny deal to move out

## Only 'points of agreement' signed, says Jalan Sultan/Bukit Bintang panel

By T.K. LETCHUMY TAMBOO  
t.k.letchumy@mmail.com.my

THE Preserve Jalan Sultan and Jalan Bukit Bintang (PJSJBB) committee has denied the government's statement that they have signed a mutual agreement with MRT Corporation (MRT Corp) to move out of their properties.

Calling it a false statement, the committee's co-chairman, Yong Yew Wei, said none of the landowners had signed any agreement.

"Until today, none of the landowners in Jalan Bukit Bintang, Jalan Sultan or Jalan Inai has signed the mutual agreement with MRT Corp. They've only signed points of agreement (POA), which are not legally-binding," he said.

"Yet, the Finance Ministry has claimed otherwise."

Yong was referring to Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Dr Awang Adek Husin's statement in Dewan Rakyat yesterday that the

government would offer compensation to landowners affected by the project, and that only two out of the 23 Jalan Sultan landowners had not accepted the compensation proposal.

Awang Adek had also said some owners who would have to move out of their properties for six months during the construction would also be compensated accordingly.

Yong said the reason why the owners had not signed the agreement was because there were many unacceptable conditions.

"Negotiation between the owners' lawyers and MRT Corp's lawyers is ongoing. When the minister said most owners have signed the agreement, it's actually a false statement," he told reporters at the parliament lobby.

"He must inform the public that no owners have signed it yet."

Yong said MRT Corp had repeatedly said constructing tunnel work below Jalan Sultan and Jalan Bukit Bintang was safe, de-

spite former project owner Syarikat Prasarana Negara Bhd (Prasarana) saying on Aug 11 last year that any building constructed above an underground tunnel in the city would be vulnerable to risk and safety issues.

"It's confusing and unconvincing. Nobody can guarantee that buildings would remain stable and undamaged during tunnelling works. So, what shall we do? Which direction do we have to go now?" he said.

Yong said the PJSJBB wants a social impact assessment report and a soil investigation report.

"The first report will cover the project's impact on business, on community life and the daily activities of these three areas. The second report is important because we want to understand the soil structure," he said.

"Until we receive the reports, the government's compensation is irrelevant because there are about 3,000 households living in Jalan Sultan that'll be affected if businesses there

are stopped. That will affect about 30,000 people in Jalan Sultan alone."

He said the reports should also be made public.

Two weeks ago, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak had said the government was prepared to declare buildings in Jalan Sultan as heritage sites, assuring owners that their shop lots would not be affected by the project.

However, Yong said landowners have received a letter from MRT Corp's lawyers to vacate the place before this month end.

He said they consulted Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz on this matter.

"When we asked him (Mohd Nazri) if the owners should leave as per instructions from MRT Corp, he said there is no need to vacate the area immediately and asked us to wait from a reply from the Prime Minister.

"We hope for an amicable solution by the Prime Minister," said Yong.