

# MRT Corp: No plans to buy BB Plaza

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Mass Rapid Transit Corp Sdn Bhd has no plans to buy the Bukit Bintang Plaza (BB Plaza) to help build an MRT station.

Instead, MRT Corp said, it will work with the government to build an underground station integrated with BB Plaza.

MRT Corp chief executive officer Datuk Azhar Abdul Hamid said it is in talks with the government on this, adding that the plan will do away with the need to involve private properties in completing the project and at the same time provides a golden opportunity to re-position the almost 40-year-old BB Plaza, Azhar said.

“It must be clarified that there has never been any plan to acquire BB Plaza. Our principal focus is to build the Sungai Buloh-Kajang MRT Line. We do not want to be distracted by property development at this stage,” he said in a statement yesterday.

Potential construction of the Bukit Bintang

station presents several opportunities including a chance for UDA Holdings to redevelop BB Plaza, Azhar said.

“The other end of Jalan Bukit Bintang has seen rapid redevelopment over the past few years, and this has clearly added Kuala Lumpur’s appeal to both locals and tourists alike. BB Plaza can be part of this new Bukit Bintang. The 1970s-built BB Plaza has the potential to be the icon of the area,” he said.

Another opportunity will be on enhancing and elevating the Bumiputera agenda, as opposed to using cheap rental as a means to incentivise and promote their participation in trade.

“Bumiputeras can now shift gears and become entrepreneurs. Of course an area for small traders can be built into the redeveloped mall, but they must also be given the opportunity to move up the value chain. This elevates their role and is value-adding, so MRT Corp sees no reason why UDA’s role in promoting active participation of Bumiputeras in retail in urban areas has to be compromised with redevelopment. In fact, it can be enhanced,” said Azhar.