

Cafe operators seek fair compensation

KUALA LUMPUR: Sidewalk cafe operators at BB Plaza in Jalan Bukit Bintang hope to meet MRT Corp to discuss the compensation details before moving out this Sunday.

Gloria Jean's cafe operator, Mohd Nasir Mohd Rashid, said operations ran as usual with some 20 employees.

"They were relieved when we told them about the compensation which MRT Corp had agreed for us to move out.

"We have come to accept this (moving out) to give way for the MRT project for the benefit of mass public. We hoped to work something out before our last day of operations on Saturday," he said.

It was reported that the tenants of BB Plaza were upset with the news of the 33-year-old building to be demolished to make way for the MRT project, with the sidewalk cafe operators first to be evicted.

They were supposed to move out by June 30 and had through pro-tem action committee against BB Plaza demolition submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister's Department and had a meeting with Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob last Tuesday.

In a joint Press statement, BB Plaza owner Uda Holdings Bhd (UDA) and MRT Corp ensured a

fair compensation to the affected kiosks, namely Gloria Jean's Coffees, Starbucks Coffee, Hot & Roll and MADO Ice Cream (Yayasan Selangor's tenant).

Ismail then announced after the meeting that the building would not be demolished and that only the sidewalk cafes are affected with the of MRT project.

"These outlets will make way for the works to be performed at ground level. The construction of the underground BB Sentral MRT Station will have minimum ground movement during the works scheduled till 2016," he said.

"MRT Corp has in the planning stage of the station envisioned integration with BB Plaza. However, following discussions between MRT Corp and UDA, has revised the station design to avoid having direct integration with the plaza.

"A covered walkway will be built for the safety of pedestrians and shoppers, while a hoarded entry into BB Plaza will also be built with signages that say Business As usual to be put up at strategic sections of the hoarding."

Meanwhile, part of Jalan Bulan 1 (linking to Jalan Bukit Bintang) will be temporarily closed from November 30 for four years to accommodate the works. **By Nuradzimmah Daim**