

# 'Give us real plans'

## Residents want MRT Corp to be transparent

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**P**INGGIR Zaaba residents in Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur, want Mass Rapid Transit Corp Sdn Bhd (MRT Corp) to make real plans and be more transparent in their mitigation efforts before the MRT project kicks off.

"We need to be reassured but reassurance should come from real plans. MRT Corp is focussed on project-completion, not taking into account the health, safety, security and environment (HSSE) aspects," a resident, Akhramsyah Muammar Ubaidah Tan Sri Sanusi said, adding that the session organised by MRT Corp to brief stakeholders on construction activities was not fruitful as MRT Corp and Mudajaya Constructions Sdn Bhd were not able to adequately address various issues of concern.

For example, Akhramsyah said, MRT Corp's reply that it would use netting to mitigate dust dispersal was inadequate.

"We want to know what kind of netting will be used. Individuals exposed to fine dust face an increased risk of respiratory diseases such as asthma and bronchitis.

"In this case, the young children and the elderly will be most affected," said Akhramsyah, a retail operations manager in a multi-national company.

He said these were part of the HSSE requirements which had to be met in order for the Environment Department to issue the licence to operate.

Akhramsyah said mitigation measures to safeguard the welfare of residents were still unclear at this point in time and questioned if there were plans to temporarily relocate residents during the worst exposure periods.

"Considering that MRT's parapet extends over our street, residents face the risk of objects falling from overhead. However, we were not reassured about what assessment had been made of this risk, let alone what mitigating measures would be taken," he said.

On whether there would be a stop-work policy if a resident was hurt by a falling object, Akhramsyah said MRT Corp could not respond to this.

He explained, a stop-work policy banned further work until investigations are completed and mitigating measures presented.

Other areas of concern highlighted by residents during the briefing was traffic control. Residents also stated that MRT Corp was unable to fulfil its earlier promise of restricting MRT workers from entering Pinggir Zaaba.

"We want to be very clear in this as we do not want 'outsiders' loitering in the area," Akhramsyah said.

He also said MRT Corp could not respond when questioned about pest control and soil exposure in the event the trees in the area were felled to make way for hoarding works.

On exposed soil, he said it would be washed into drains, resulting in clogged drains and potential flooding in the area.

A resident for 37 years, James Valentine, 70, emphasised that it was impossible for a fire engine to get through. The same goes for a garbage truck.

He also stressed the need for MRT to set up a control centre at Pinggir Zaaba as residents felt the company's 24-hour hotline was not sufficient should an emergency arise.

MRT Corp's response to the issues were as follows:

"The main barrier against dust will be a line of hoarding to be installed along Pinggir Zaaba. The hoarding will form a physical barrier to prevent dust and fumes from reaching houses. The netting will be used dur-

ing construction of the pier columns and deck structure. The hoarding and netting are meant to reduce the amount of dust affecting the residents," said MRT Strategic Communications and Public Relations director Amir Mahmood Razak.

In addition to these measures, Amir said the source of dust during the construction period such as debris would be removed daily from the site.

He said the project's Detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIA) has been approved by the authorities.

On the exposure of significant sound and vibration during piling works, he said the line of hoarding installed along Pinggir Zaaba would deflect noise away from the residential areas.

"This will mitigate noise generated during construction work. Upon completion of construction and when the MRT line is operational, sound barriers with different heights at different areas will be used," he said.

On whether there would be a stop-work policy, Amir said:

"For every job carried out on site, there is a method statement, which describes exactly how the work is executed. Included in this document is risk assessment involved in the work and mitigating measures for such risks.

"The Emergency Response Plan (ERP) caters to anything that might go wrong. When an incident occurs on site affecting the public, an immediate investigation will be conducted into the incident.

"Depending on the severity of the case, work on site may be suspended for the period dur-

**We were not reassured of what assessment has been made of this risk of objects falling from overhead, let alone what mitigating measures will be taken.**

—AKHRAMSYAH MUAMMAR UBAIDAH TAN SRI SANUSI

ing which the investigation is being carried out. A stop-work order may not apply for all incidents.

"We have an incident monitoring system for all work sites for the worst-case scenarios. A standard operating practice is in place," he assured.

"In order to prevent falling objects, a proposal will be made that the hoarding line be extended at the ground level to the edge of the MRT parapet. This will ensure any falling object will land within the worksite. At the deck level of the MRT structure, there will be barriers to prevent objects falling on the worksite below."

On the request for a control centre in Pinggir Zaaba, MRT Corp is studying this request.

However, the hotline remains active 24-hours a day, while details of the contact person for the work project contractor (WPC) have been given to the residents.

Both the Project Delivery Partner (PDP) and WPC play a major role in monitoring workers and their whereabouts. MMC-Gamuda as our PDP and Mudajaya will be the first points of contact. They will monitor the sites, and MRT Corp will also be doing its rounds.

Measures will also be taken to cover exposed soil. Regular inspection and clean-up of drains, including setting up of temporary drains/silt traps as necessary (as per the Erosion Sediment Control Plan) will also be carried out.