

'We engaged stakeholders'

> Talks with Ampang Park strata owners halted after case taken to court: MRT Corp

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KUALA LUMPUR: MRT Corp corporate communications director Datuk Najmuddin Abdullah said the company had conducted several public engagements and town hall sessions since 2015 with stakeholders over the construction of an MRT station for the Sungai Buloh-Serdang-Putrajaya Line (SSP Line).

In refuting allegations by a non-governmental organisation that the company refused to engage stakeholders, he said the decision of 39 strata owners of the Ampang Park shopping centre to bring the matter to court in 2016 had put an end to negotiations between the two parties, pending the decision of the Federal Court.

"Now, it has turned into a legal proceeding. When it was brought to court, discussions had to be stopped. They were the ones who took up the case and not us," he told a press conference at MRT Corp's office

at Menara I&P 1.

Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs Association of Malaysia (Ikhlas) had on Friday claimed that MRT Corp had refused to have discussions with the strata owners.

The group, with several strata owners, had submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak to intervene in the issue and put an end to the deadlock.

The 39 strata owners had filed a judicial review on Jan 8, 2016 at the High Court to challenge the government's decision to acquire the shopping centre.

However, the court's decision was not in favour of the owners and the matter was brought to the Appeals Court, which also decided in favour of the government.

The matter is now pending at the Federal Court.

Najmuddin said during one of the town hall sessions in 2015, MRT Corp had offered an alternative design for the station to be shifted slightly without having to demolish the building.

However, an underground tunnel would have to be constructed beneath the shopping centre to connect the MRT station to a nearby LRT station, Najmuddin added.