

Do not politicise MRT line shift, SPAD tells Pakatan
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 12 — The Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) told opposition lawmakers today not to politicise the realignment of the Klang Valley MRT line on Jalan Damansara, insisting the move was not made to save an ex-minister's home.

SPAD chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar also lamented alleged attempts to create "confusion and dissatisfaction" with the multibillion-ringgit rail project and urged the public not to be swayed by the claims.

SPAD chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar today called the recent brouhaha over the realignment of the Klang Valley MRT line on Jalan Damansara a "non-issue". — file pic "SPAD, as regulator and supervising agency of the MRT project, acted based on public interest and was guided by the law," he said in a statement here titled 'Do not politicise changes to MRT alignment'.

He cited "serious flaws" in the accusation made by DAP's Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua, pointing out the lawmaker had first alleged the MRT line would affect the "VIP's bungalow" before switching it to "swimming pool".

"The sudden switch ... clearly suggests serious flaws in the accuracy of the 'facts' being relied upon to perpetuate this non-issue," he said.

Syed Hamid insisted the original MRT line had never affected the bungalow and therefore could not have been the reason behind the proposed realignment.

He also rubbished Pua's claim that tunnelling had already begun, pointing out that the tender for the work had only just been called and would only be awarded in the first quarter of next year.

"We are very concerned over the sheer misinformation being spread about the re-alignment at this location. We hope that this is not being deliberately done to confuse the rakyat who have voiced their overwhelming wish to see the MRT project completed," he said.

Pua first made the allegation last Wednesday, claiming work on the original tunnel site has now been stopped, the tunnel portal relocated and a variation order issued to the contractor, ensuring that the line no longer passes beneath the house.

He complained of SPAD's alleged willingness to reroute the MRT for the sake of saving a former minister's house, suggesting political interference in a national infrastructure project.

But SPAD denied the allegation, saying it had decided to change the proposed rail line in Jalan Damansara after getting feedback from landowners for two main reasons: firstly, there was suitable alternative land nearby that allowed it to shift the MRT's original alignment; and secondly, it was more prudent to do so.

Reaffirming the position today, Syed Hamid said "personalities or political considerations" were never considered when determining the rail alignment.

"SPAD considers all calls for changes to the alignment based on the facts and merits of each case, all the time ensuring public interest is taken care of," he said.

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