

100-year-old village in Jln Gombak fraught with problems

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Photo by SHAHRUL FAZRY

KAMPUNG Puah is a peaceful and scenic village, dotted with wooden houses, a river and chickens roaming about on the tarred roads.

However, residents are plagued by worry over flashfloods that occur during downpours and the redevelopment plans for the area.

The village is located near the Kuala Lumpur city centre, along the third mile of Jalan Gombak.

"This village has more than 100 years of history behind it. Most of us have lived here all our lives and want to continue doing so," said villager Ahmad Daud Mohd Ali, 61.

Ahmad Daud said the villagers had been offered the People's Public Housing (PPR) units three times in the past, but all the offers fell through.

This time however, we were only offered units for rental and a paltry compensation," he said.

The Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) letter dated April this year stated that the compensation as RM1,000. Ahmad Daud said that after paying the deposit for the units, they would be left with only about RM400.



Work in progress: The River of Life project that is taking place along the riverbank of Sungai Gombak that cuts through Kampung Puah.

Batu PAS division chief Ishak Surin said they protested against the redevelopment of the land three times, from 2008 onwards as well as during the Kuala Lumpur Draft Plan 2020 briefings.

"The authorities re-zoned the land where our houses are located for other use, including for industrial, commercial and housing purposes. There is no place for us here," said Ishak.

Ahmad Daud said villagers were living in fear of flashfloods, especially in low-lying areas along the riverbank.

"The floods got worse after the RM4bil "River of Life" project was undertaken along Sungai Gombak, which runs through the village. The floodwaters even rose to as high as a metre once," he said.

Wangsa Maju MP Datuk Dr Tan Kee Kwong said living conditions

in the area was also bad, with dilapidated houses.

"This is not a remote area but near the city centre, with the Petronas Twin Towers in sight," said Dr Tan, adding that he would raise the issue in Parliament.

"It is terrible that there is not even a proper and safe entrance to this village. People have to drive to an entrance near the DUKE Highway and then cross a construction site before getting here," said Dr Tan.

Wangsa Maju Barisan Nasional chief Datuk Dr Mohd Shafei Abdullah, who has been to the area numerous times, had reportedly said he was looking into relocating the residents.

"I am working out a plan for the construction of proper houses in this area for them.

"The residents will only have to move out to temporary homes during the construction and redevelopment works.

"Once completed, they can return," he had said.

He had also said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had visited the area and promised that it would be maintained as a traditional village.

DBKL could not be reached for comments.