

River revival delayed

Project progressing smoothly nonetheless, says FT Minister



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THE Government's River of Life (RoL) initiative to improve Klang River's water quality from untouchable (categorised as either a Class IV or V river) to that which is suitable for recreational use (Class IIb) is progressing smoothly even though the project is slightly behind time.

Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor said the land acquisition and squatter relocation exercise had caused delay to the project.

"Our current status is 14% but we are supposed to be at 17%.

"We were delayed in areas like Puah Pond and Kampung Puah by squatters who refused to move," he said.

Tengku Adnan said the Government through its agencies like Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) would push towards ensuring the project met its deadline.

"We are hoping to see the returns of our investment in river cleansing and beautification efforts when we sell the land along the riverbanks," he said, adding that the Government hoped to make about RM4bil from the riverbank land sale once the project was completed.

"At the end of the day, when the public see the huge transformation and the developments that come up along the riverbanks they will appreciate it better," he elaborated.



Tengku Adnan was speaking to reporters after spending an hour touring the RoL project site nearby Bangkok Bank.

He was accompanied by Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Ahmad Phesal Talib, Pemandu director of greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley NKEA Mohd Azharuddin Mat Sah, Department of National Heritage director Dr Robiah Abdul Rashid and senior officers from DBKL.

Their journey took them along the heritage trails along Bangkok Bank area, Lebuhr Pasar Besar bridge and Masjid Jamek.

The entourage then proceeded towards the historical staircase that is said to be 100 years old.

The staircase adjoining Masjid Jamek was recently unearthed after works for the RoL project in the area commenced.

Both Tengku Adnan and Ahmad Phesal took a moment to reminisce at two wooden posts — the spot where sampans used to dock at the confluence of the river.

"I find this (discovery) fascinating. Once the project is completed, this will be an iconic landmark in the city for years to come and it will become one of the must-visit place for tourists," he said.

The RoL is a project under the Government's Economic Transformation Programme, initiated under the Greater Kuala Lumpur

Historical significance: Tengku Adnan (third from left), FT Deputy Minister Datuk Loga Bala Mohan (fifth from left) and Ahmad Phesal (extreme right) admiring the view on the historical steps of the Masjid Jamek.

National Key Economic Area.

The RM4bil project, will include transforming 11 river corridors along a 10.7km stretch of the Klang and Gombak rivers into tourist landmarks, as well as a clean-up exercise of a 110km stretch of both rivers.

The beautification project will include 11 spots starting with river corridors in Titiwangsa, Pekeliling, PWTC, Sime Darby loop, Dang Wangi, Raja Laut, Masjid Jamek, Railway Station, Brickfields, KL Sentral and Seputeh.

Masjid Jamek area, which comes under Precinct 7, is not only strategic, but has great potential to become a vibrant tourist spot.