

KL RIVER OF LIFE PROJECT ON TRACK

BIG IMPROVEMENT:

City folk will notice a cleaner Sungai Klang as early as 2018

FOR many people, Sungai Klang is a muddy river with water of the colour of teh tarik. The river flowing through the heart of the country's capital is also littered with rubbish.

However, this will soon change as an ambitious plan to transform Sungai Klang and Sungai Gombak into an iconic river in Kuala Lumpur has been put into action, with a vibrant and livable waterfront of high economic value.

The River of Life (RoL) project is one of the Entry Point Projects under the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley National Key Economic Area (NKEA), and consists of three phases — River Cleaning; River Beautification and Land Development.

Twenty-six agencies from four ministries, two states and three municipalities, are working together on this mammoth project, which seeks to turn the Greater KL/KV area into one that is among the most livable and top economic cities in the world.

Since 2011, the on-going project is now nearing completion of its first phase, the River Cleaning phase, which aims to clean and improve the 110km stretch along the tributaries of Sungai Klang in Kuala Lumpur city.

Pemandu Greater KL/Klang Valley & Urban Public Transport director Mohd Azharuddin Mat Sah says the project,



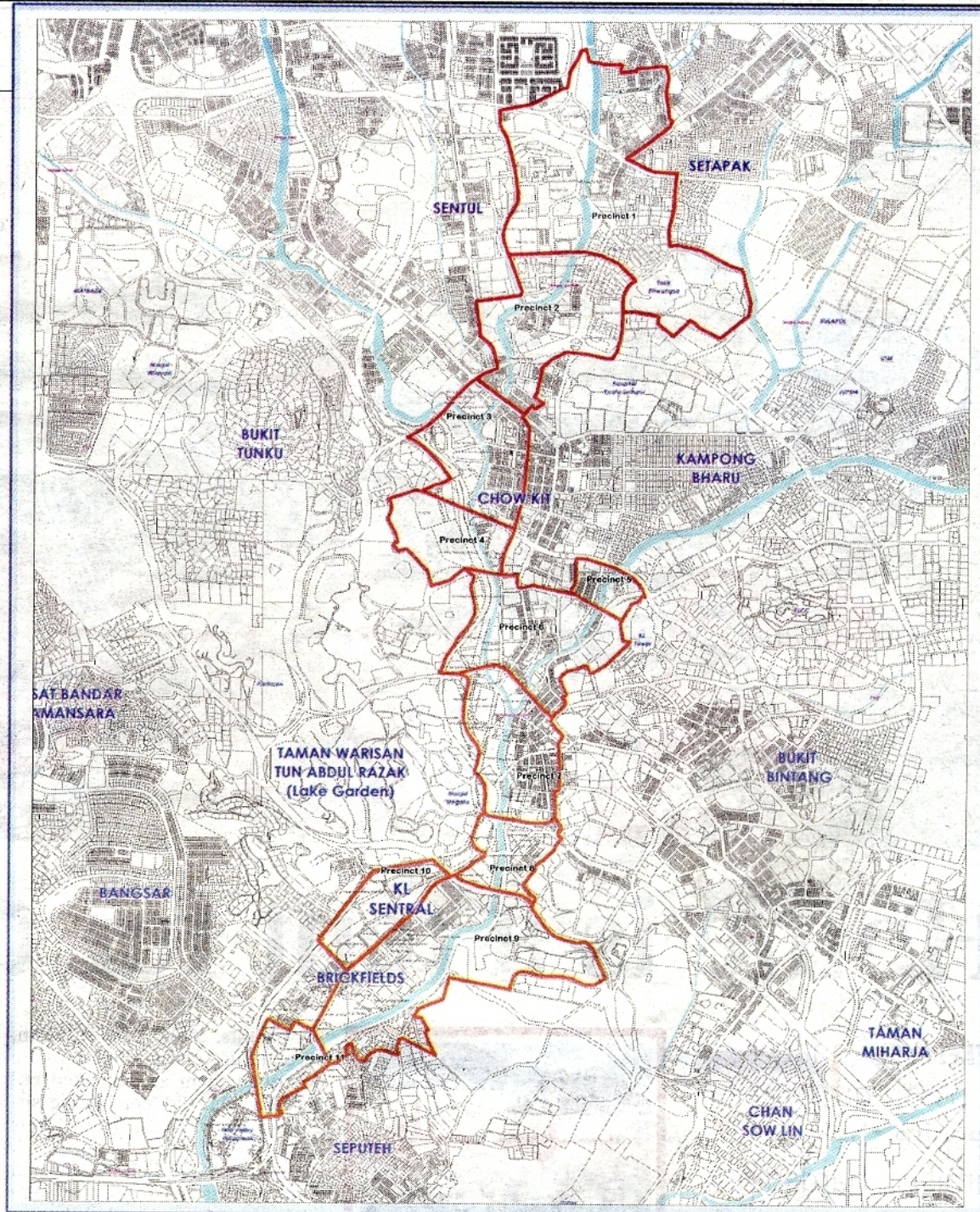
Pemandu Greater KL/Klang Valley & Urban Public Transport director **Mohd Azharuddin Mat Sah** says the project is a commitment to turn Kuala Lumpur into a waterfront city



DID river basin management division director **Datuk Hanapi Mohamad Noor** says the public outreach is an important component in cleaning up the rivers

with a planned investment of RM4 billion, underlines the government's commitment to transforming Kuala Lumpur into a waterfront city.

Datuk Hanapi Mohamad Noor, director of the river basin management division in the Irrigation and Drainage Department (DID), says the River Cleaning phase aims to improve the water from the current Class III and V, to Class IIB, by 2020.



Map outlining precincts where the RoL project is being carried out in Kuala Lumpur.

Class IIB means the river water is safe to touch.

"In many famous cities, their rivers play a major role in keeping the city vibrant and livable. We hope to emulate the work in Sungai Kallang in Singapore, which was once very polluted, but is now a major tourist attraction.

"This is a timely initiative. It is not too late to rehabilitate Sungai Klang. When we started in 2011, the water quality

index of the river was below 50 and it now, it stands at 63," says Hanapi.

This phase of the project covers Selayang, Ampang Jaya and Kuala Lumpur, and is being implemented at a cost of RM3.4 billion. It involves eight rivers — Sungai Gombak, Sungai Batu, Sungai Jinjang, Sungai Keroh, Sungai Bunus, Sungai Ampang, Sungai Kerayong and Sungai Klang, with a total distance of 110km.

This phase is also the most extensive, as it tackles the sources of pollution in the rivers, which have been identified as hawker centres, restaurants and industrial zones.

There are 65 work packages in this phase, which will be implemented from 2011 to 2020. Thirty-four of them have been completed. They include the setting up 521 gross pollutant traps; 199 communal grease traps; building four wastewater treatment plants and five river water treatment plants, at a cost of RM140 million.

Currently in progress are the provisions of another 154 communal grease traps, one wastewater treatment plant; nine river water treatment plants; two flood retention ponds; upgrading of 15 low-performing sewage treatment plants; closing down 280 small or non-effective sewage treatment plants and the sewerage conveyance system in Jinjang, Kepong and Bunus.

Azharuddin says a major improve-

ment of water quality index will be seen as early as 2018.

Hanapi says besides the river cleaning work, an important component is the public outreach programme.

This is done through activities, such as the Smart Ranger, River Carnival, River Ranger, Open Classroom and Dapur Hijau. These activities seek to engage and educate the community on how they can keep the rivers clean.

"The response to the project has been good. The public is keen to co-operate and implement the necessary changes such as using the grease traps and proper waste disposal methods as they are aware that a cleaner river benefits the people," says Hanapi.

The next phase is the River Beautification phase, which will improve the livability of the riverbanks in Kuala Lumpur. This involves beautification works along the 10.7km stretch of Sungai Klang and Sungai Gombak corridor, which houses significant landmarks, such as Dataran Merdeka, the Sultan Abdul Samad building and Masjid Jamek.

The final phase is the Land Development phase, which seeks to recoup the RM4.4 billion spent on the project through economic investments in areas near the river corridors.

Potential government land will be identified and tendered out to private developers through a competitive bidding process.



The **Puah flood retention pond** in Sentul is part of the 65 work packages in the **River Cleaning phase**.