

KL lawmakers want answers on Bohol retention pond land deal

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AS reports of a proposal to alienate land for development near the Bohol retention pond in Seputeh, Kuala Lumpur come to light, two government agencies tasked with protecting the city's water bodies are passing the buck.

The Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) Malaysia and Kuala Lumpur DID, which act as custodians for the city's rivers, catchments and flood retention ponds, are both claiming it is not under their jurisdiction.

"When approached for comment on the matter, a representative for Kuala Lumpur DID directed *StarMetro* to seek clarification from DID Malaysia instead.

However, the DID Malaysia spokesperson claimed that the issue fell under the jurisdiction of Kuala Lumpur DID.

Neither party has issued any statement over the matter.

However, news of the proposed alienation of six plots of land around the pond has shocked several Kuala Lumpur lawmakers.

They want answers from the authorities responsible for



The Bohol flood retention pond in Seputeh is one of 15 in Kuala Lumpur. — Filepic

maintaining these water bodies in Kuala Lumpur.

"I am going to bring this up in Parliament and I want answers," Seputeh MP Teresa Kok said.

"How is this even possible? We haven't recovered from the devastating floods (Dec 18, 2021) and they want to develop more flood retention pond land?"

Titiwangsa MP Datuk Seri Johari Abdul Ghani said: "The government must ensure that

every piece of Kuala Lumpur land earmarked for a water retention pond must not be touched for any type of development.

"Land is scarce in KL, and it is not replaceable. With the uncertainty surrounding climate change, we need to be prepared for any eventuality, especially when it comes to heavy rain and flooding."

Johari added that the justification to alienate the water retention pond land to build



StarMetro's report on May 8

affordable homes cannot be accepted as the buyers of the houses would eventually suffer if that area floods in the future.

Kepong MP Lim Lip Eng planned to raise the matter with the new mayor, Datuk Kamarulzaman Mat Salleh, during a meeting with KL MPs on May 12.

"I may also ask him to bring the MPs and media members to visit the Bohol flood retention pond," he said.

Lim said that he wanted to know the current status of the land alienation process and if the land premium had been paid.

StarMetro, in an exclusive report on May 8, revealed that six plots of land at the Bohol retention pond had been proposed to be alienated for a residential development involving affordable housing (40%) and condominiums (60%).

The second biggest flood retention pond in Kuala Lumpur is presently gazetted as reserve land for recreation.

Bohol is one of 15 flood retention ponds in Kuala Lumpur.

Wangsa Maju MP Zahir Hassan said the pond was not gazetted as part of an overall flood mitigation programme.

"We should not be against development, but it must be sustainable.

"It has to be looked at holistically so that there won't be issues of over-development that jeopardise the function of the flood retention ponds."

Zahir added that the conditions of development near such sites must be stringent and take into consideration stakeholders' views.

He also stressed the importance of stakeholders, government agencies and developers' involvement in the drafting process for the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2040 and Kuala Lumpur City Plan 2040.