

# 'Govt trying to cancel deals involving reserve land in KL'

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FIFTY-TWO plots of government land in Kuala Lumpur – some reserved as green lungs and open spaces – have been alienated and leased to developers and businessmen between 2020 and 2022, says Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's political secretary Azman Abidin.

The land deals, Azman said, also involved land surrounding flood retention ponds.

"We are trying to right some of these land deals by cancelling them but it is always a challenge when land premiums have already been paid."

"So far, the Prime Minister has ordered an immediate freeze on the sale or lease of government lands and this includes plots that are in the process of being alienated," he said.

Azman said the only way out of the land deals where the premiums had been paid, was to ensure that the conditions attached were fulfilled.

"Land that was alienated with conditional approval, can only be sold if the conditions are met."

"Land surrounding flood retention ponds usually have certain technical requirements that must be fulfilled for the deal to go through."

Azman reiterated that only when the conditions are ful-



Azman says 52 plots of reserved land were alienated and leased between 2020 and 2022.

filled, can Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) issue a development order for the project.

In May, the government cancelled the proposed alienation of the Bohol flood retention pond in KL to a private developer.

The Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur Land Exco (JKTWPKL) gave conditional approval to the company to alienate part of the land for a housing development project on Oct 20, 2021.

However the developer's failure to fulfil key technical requirements, which were part



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of the conditions required for the alienation to be successful, led to the cancellation.

Local council expert and lawyer Derek Fernandez said if land was alienated on the condition that certain requirements must be fulfilled, especially around water bodies like flood retention ponds, then developers must comply with the stipu-

lated conditions.

"If they are unable to fulfil the requirements, then they (developers) just have to return the land to the government."

He said that these strict technical conditions were put in place in view of climate change and in anticipation of extreme weather conditions.

*The Star* had previously

reported in 2018 that the government set up a task force to investigate 97 questionable land deals by DBKL, and had ordered 19 to be cancelled and 15 to be renegotiated.

The then Federal Territories minister Khalid Abdul Samad said the 97 land transactions totalling 273.27ha were worth RM5.63bil. – By BAVANI M.