

Mega market makeover

With the RM177mil redevelopment of Pasar Jalan Raja Bot in KL set to pick up again, traders hope it will solve parking and hygiene problems in the area once ready in 2025. >2&3



Hive of activity: Zone 1B transit market at Pasar Jalan Raja Bot in Kuala Lumpur's Chow Kit area which currently houses fish and meat traders will be demolished when phase four of the redevelopment commences. (Inset) Phase two of the project is 95% completed. — Photos: WILLIAM GARY/The Star



The bright and airy vegetable and fruit market under phase one of Pasar Jalan Raja Bot redevelopment. — Photos: WILLIAM GARY/The Star

Eager to see Jln Raja Bot redevelopment completed

(18 DECEMBER 2023) p2 the star, p2-p3

Traders want govt to expedite stalled market project in KL

By JAROD LIM
jarodlim@thestar.com.my

THE delay in the RM177.5mil redevelopment of Pasar Jalan Raja Bot, also known as Pasar Chow Kit, is prolonging difficulties faced by stakeholders there.

For a start, traders and visitors constantly have to deal with lack of parking spots in the area.

Inadequate facilities, poor hygiene and haphazard setting up of temporary areas for the sprawling market are some of the other challenges.

It is a far cry from the modern market that the government had promised.

In fact, a decade has passed since the announcement of the market's redevelopment but the project is still stuck in just the second phase.

Traders are hoping these problems can be solved through the project and want it expedited under the present government.

The facelift, to be carried out in four phases, was first mooted in March 2013 by then deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

At the time, the project was scheduled for completion in 2017.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman said in the first parliament session last March that the project was now expected to be completed by October 2025.

She was responding to a question from Titiwangsa MP Johari Ghani on whether the redevelopment project was still ongoing.

"Phase one of the project was completed on April 25, 2016 and phase two is 90% completed.

"However, the main contractor for phase two was terminated on Aug 18, 2021, and on Sept 26, 2022 a new contractor was appointed.

"The new contractor will complete the remaining phases," she added.

Given the initial delay of the project, traders are sceptical that the overall project can be completed in the set time frame.

They want the Federal Government to complete phase two first, which consists of a

market complex to house the traders.

In October, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) updated traders on the project's progress.

Persatuan Penjaja-Penjaja dan Peniaga-Peniaga Kecil Kawasan Chow Kit chairman Yuesnaedy Idrus said the authorities should expedite phase two as it had been several years since the first phase's completion.

"However, we learned that the road to enter and exit the phase two complex has not been completed.

"The consensus among traders is that we will not move in until the roads, which will serve as a loading bay and access for visitors, are finalised.

"The complex should be fully ready before the traders are relocated," he added.

According to Yuesnaedy, the delay was caused by restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic and change in contractor.

"The market has been around since the 1960s and all the traders operated from the current vegetable and fruit traders section, between Jalan Raja Bot and

Jalan Raja Alang.

"Only when the redevelopment project was announced that the traders moved to transit markets around the original building.

"Phase one, which was completed in 2016, focused on the vegetable and fruit market.

"The vegetable and fruit traders were moved there, while the rest stayed at the transit markets.

"The chicken, meat and fish traders were placed in zones 1A, 1B and 1E of a transit market next to the vegetable and fruit sellers," he said.

Yuesnaedy added that the traders who were not part of phase one had to operate at the transit markets for several years.

"For some of the traders, their business was affected by the relocation so they eventually moved out," he said.

According to DBKL, the first phase comprised an open-air building concept with a high roof.

Next to it is phase two's market complex that will be home to a wet market, sundry shops and food court.

In a statement, DBKL said the



Some of the stalls will be moved to phases two and three of the project.

complex was now 95% completed with construction work ending this year.

Phase three consists of a similar building which will be built near phase two.

This building is expected to be completed by July 2025 and will house 560 stalls as well as a police station.

Phase four, it said, would consist of a multistorey carpark and market selling local vegetables.

Association secretary Chew Meng Leong said the traders had drawn lots for their stalls in the phase two complex.

"Phase two only houses half of the meat sellers and sundry shop traders as the phase three complex is meant to house the remaining traders.

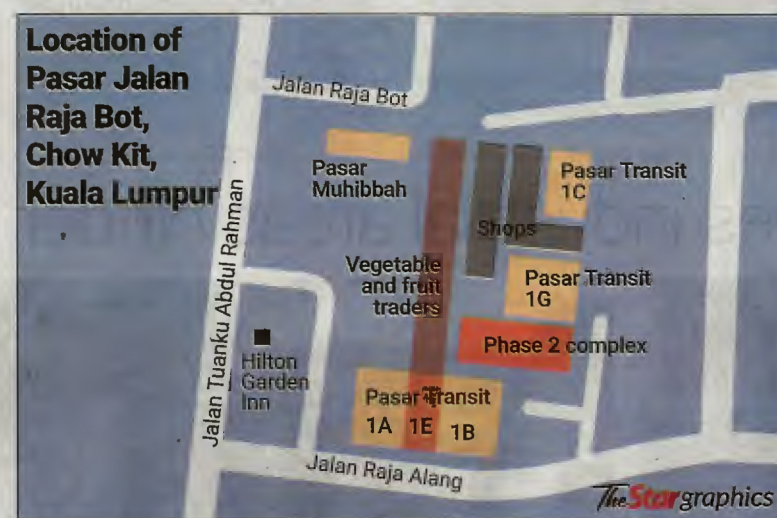
"Currently, phase two still has its site hoarding up but we hope that when it is completed, it will be connected to the vegetable and fruit market so visitors and traders can move around the market easily," he said.

According to Chew, the phase three complex would come up at the Pasar Transit Zones 1C and 1G (see map) site while phase four would replace Pasar Transit Zones 1A, 1E and 1B.

"The old buildings such as Pasar Transit Zone 1C will be demolished to make way for the redevelopment.

"When phase three is completed, traders in Pasar Transit Zones 1A, 1E and 1B will move there so that work on the multistorey carpark can begin," he said.

Chew added that Johari had met with the traders and meetings were to be held periodically with DBKL to update traders on



the construction progress.

DBKL said the redevelopment of Pasar Jalan Raja Bot had to be carried out in phases as the traders did not want to relocate temporarily to a site that was far from the market.

"As such, DBKL took over 11 old shophouses next to Jalan Raja Alang and demolished the buildings.

"The buildings were turned into a transit market to house the affected traders.

"In fact, several transit markets were built around Pasar Jalan Raja Bot.

"It is estimated that 1,477 traders are affected by this redevelopment," read the statement.

It also said, "As the project will involve demolishing a huge part of existing traders' space at the junction of Jalan Raja Bot and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, affected traders will be relocated to the second phase complex to

facilitate the construction of phase three.

"The cost of the entire project is RM177.5mil."

DBKL added that visitors to the newly built Pasar Jalan Raja Bot complex would enjoy an organised, safe, clean, comfortable and modern environment.

"The market will be equipped with storage rooms, refrigerator spaces, toilets, surau and traders' management office.

"Its design also takes into consideration reorganising traders by category such as wet market, vegetable and fruit market, dry food, dry sundries and food court.

"The complex will also have a wastewater treatment system that ensures wastewater from the market is cleaned before being channelled to the sewers as well as a rainwater harvesting system for use in the market's daily cleaning," said DBKL.



Phase one of the redevelopment was completed in 2016.



Some of the fish and meat traders will be moved to the phase two complex when it is ready.



Yuesnaedy (left) and Chew with the 95%-completed phase two complex behind them.



Empty tables at one of the transit markets as traders moved out due to poor business.