

# Preserving KL's crumbling heritage

By SHALINI RAVINDRAN  
shaliniravindran@thestar.com.my

## Execution of plan expected to be ready in time for Visit M'sia 2026

PLANS to ensure the preservation of Kuala Lumpur's heritage buildings, some of which are in poor condition, are being drawn up, says Dr Zaliha Mustafa.

The Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) said the execution of the plan, which was being prepared by ThinkCity, would hopefully be ready in time for Visit Malaysia 2026.

"As co-chair of the Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District (KLCCD) committee, we are working closely with various agencies.

"The overall planning is being done by ThinkCity, and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) is collaborating to make it happen," she said when asked to comment on the state of heritage buildings in the Jalan Raja precinct.

On Feb 26, *StarMetro* in its report, "Stopping the rot in Jalan Raja" had highlighted the poor condition of several iconic buildings along the road.

KLCCD is the flagship project based on a strategic master plan that was drafted by ThinkCity, DBKL and National Heritage Department (JWN) in 2019 to develop the heritage core of Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Zaliha was speaking after the soft launch of the proposed new site for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Centre Kuala Lumpur in Jalan Raja.

The new centre is to be relo-



Dr Zaliha (in pink headscarf) with Kamarulzaman on her right visiting the proposed new site for the SDG Centre at the KL City Gallery building along Jalan Raja. — AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

cated from its current site at the Kuala Lumpur Library to the KL City Gallery building nearby.

The relocation is part of efforts by DBKL and Urbanise Malaysia, which is under the Housing and Local Government Ministry, to expand the functions and space of the existing centre, Dr Zaliha said.

"As the first such centre in the Asia Pacific region, the new space will not only increase the exhibition area but also help

support efforts to localise the SDGs."

Dr Zaliha said the KL City Gallery building would take about three or four years to be restored.

"There is no specific budget yet as it would depend on a study that will be done by conservators.

"As it is classified as a Category 1 Heritage Building, we are working with JWN to preserve the architectural features."

She said a dilapidation study had been undertaken by certified conservators who identified 142 defects in the property.

A conservation management plan will be drawn up before works are carried out.

The KL City Gallery building was designed by Arthur Charles Norman and originally constructed in 1898 to house the British administration's printing office.

Over the years, it has been

occupied by different government agencies and departments.

In 1986, DBKL bought the building for more than RM3mil and turned it into the first public library in Kuala Lumpur.

It became the KL City Gallery in 2012 and was also home to DBKL's Tourism Unit.

But it has been empty since early March.

Also present at the event was Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Kamarulzaman Mat Salleh.