

Residents still waiting for long-promised city park

FOLLOWING the government proposal to degazette Taman Tasik Intan Baiduri in Kepong, Kuala Lumpur, concerned residents are asking about the long-promised city park near Batu Metropolitan Park.

They want to know the status of the project, which was announced over two years ago by former Federal Territories minister Tan Sri Annuar Musa.

Annuar had said the city would get a park spanning 231.48ha comprising seven lakes and ponds.

"We are raising this question because there was a big launch in Batu Metropolitan Park, where I helped plant tecoma trees that day," said Intan Baiduri People's Housing Project (PPR) resident Salleh Borhan.

"I remember the event was part of a government initiative to plant 100 million trees in the country, and we were told to plant 100 trees that day as part of the first batch of the project in collaboration with DBKL," he added.

He had expressed excitement about the project then, saying it was part of a bigger plan to turn the area into a city park comprising seven lakes, namely Taman Metropolitan Kepong,



A bird eye's view of the seven flood retention ponds that will be given a new lease of life. — Filepic

Batu water retention pond and Intan Baiduri, Kolam 99, Seri Murni, Nanyang and Taman Wahyu lakes.

"We were happy to hear that the government was planting all those trees and planning to build a park for us," said Intan Baiduri PPR Block B chairman Norhaizam Abdul Majid.

"But what has happened to that project?

"None of the infrastructure is in place and now we hear talk about housing projects instead," he added.

For the record, in 2021, the government announced a new city park project to be located at the northern end of the city near Batu Metropolitan Park and Intan Baiduri PPR.

Among its features are pedestrian walkways, jogging tracks

and bicycle lanes covering a distance of 62.5km connecting Sentul, Tasik Titiwangsa, Kuala Lumpur city centre and ending at Taman Eko Rimba, Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve.

The project, called Projek 7 Tasik (Seven Lakes Project), was expected to take about five years to complete and would be sponsored by the Albukhary Foundation as part of its corpo-

rate social responsibility programme.

It was set to be built around seven flood retention ponds in the area, which would be transformed into a flowering forest city focusing on pollinating plants and shrubs.

The crown jewel of the project was the miles of huge flowering *Tabebuia rosea* trees, popularly known as tecoma, the Malaysian version of the *sakura*.

The tecoma's trumpet-shaped flowers in shades of purple, pink and white usually bloom between March and April. These trees were set to be one of several plant species in the park.

The first phase of the project was said to involve planting trees, while the second phase would be construction of infrastructure by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

DBKL was set to manage and maintain the Batu pond and construct the bicycle tracks.

The project was estimated to cost RM10mil.

Attempts to get DBKL for an update on the project failed to garner any response.

Nevertheless, the project is in the draft Kuala Lumpur Local Plan (KLPP2040).