



Traffic congestion around the market in Selayang is one of the reasons for public objection to the integrated abattoir project, which is situated on a piece of land next to it.



Rosli with the plans for the integrated halal chicken abattoir.



Chicken traders tend to have their own suppliers of dressed chicken and say they are unlikely to switch.

“We brought the trespassers to court and the hearing will be held soon.”

Rosli added that these two incidents had delayed the project.

Other factors included the time taken to acquire two plots of land after the company was awarded the tender, as well as delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

“The plots were a 1ha piece where the main building is located and adjacent 0.3ha land for the wastewater treatment plant.

“The Federal Department of the Director-General of Lands and Mines (PTGWP) had to hand over the land to DBKL, and rezoning the land also took some time.

“The movement control order in 2020 also delayed the project.”

Integrated processes

The integrated halal chicken abattoir is supposed to supply

80,000 to 100,000 chickens daily to traders at DBKL-owned markets such as Pasar Jalan Raja Bot, Pasar Pudu, Pasar Datuk Keramat and Pasar Sentul.

Rosli said there would be three work stations handling the chickens.

“With the integrated centre, chickens for Kuala Lumpur markets will be processed and packed in our complex in a clean and halal-certified manner before they are supplied to traders.

“The process will be certified by the Federal Territories Islamic Religious Department (Jawi).

Rosli said processes at the integrated centre would ensure waste and wastewater were handled properly.

“At the markets, when traders slaughter chickens, waste flows into the drains and clogs them.

“This would also hamper DBKL’s River of Life project to rehabilitate polluted rivers.”

He said chicken vendors could

also opt to slaughter their own chickens.

“Traders slaughtering the chickens would incur more cost and labour.

“Our solution is at a lower cost but vendors would need to collect the packed chickens at the centre or have them delivered for a fee.”

Rosli denied rumours about a potential financial crisis in the company due to the project delay.

“It is all untrue. Construction will resume by the end of the year,” he reiterated.

In a statement, DBKL said the integrated halal chicken abattoir was a private commercial development project on land owned by the mayor of Kuala Lumpur through a 30-year land lease agreement signed in December 2018.

“DBKL collects returns on the leases every month and the company has been complying with the payment schedule.

“The project is still under construction and DBKL is re-examining the terms and conditions of the lease agreement,” the statement read.

No incentive to change

A check by *StarMetro* in Pasar Jalan Raja Bot in Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur, saw several traders slaughtering chickens and ducks.

The birds were caged, with cages placed either on the counter or the floor.

Several chicken traders whom *StarMetro* interviewed said they were indifferent towards the halal chicken abattoir project since they already had their own suppliers of dressed chicken.

Trader Mohd Ismail, 58, said he sourced chickens from a slaughterhouse near the market.

“Sometimes, I take the chickens from the farms.

“I have been trading here for 33 years. As I have my regular supplier, it is unlikely that I would consider switching to another.”

A trader who wanted to be known as Mohd Kasim, 45, said he also had his own supplier.

“The chicken abattoir in Selayang is too far from the market and I would prefer a supplier who is closer.

“If there is a huge difference in the prices and delivery services, I might reconsider.”



Rows of poultry traders at Pasar Jalan Raja Bot in Chow Kit, Kuala Lumpur. They currently get their supply from various sources but the completion of an integrated halal chicken abattoir may offer them a more cost-effective alternative. — Photos: KAMARUL ARIFFIN and LOW BOON TAT/The Star

Abattoir cost expected to increase

Court case one reason construction on project was delayed, says developer



Some traders at Pasar Jalan Raja Bot slaughtering chickens on site.



The integrated halal abattoir project site is surrounded by hoarding, with little to no construction activity going on.

By JAROD LIM
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INACTIVITY at a construction site next to Pasar Harian Selayang Kuala Lumpur, where a half-built integrated halal poultry abattoir sat languishing for over a year, has led the public to believe that the project has been abandoned.

The abattoir was first mooted in 2015 to centralise poultry slaughtering processes and provide a more systematic, hygienic and halal-certified solution to especially supply dressed chicken for traders operating at Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL)-owned markets.

Currently, there is hoarding surrounding the site, on which is an unfinished multi-storey structure, with no visible construction activities.

Sahih Group Sdn Bhd executive director Datuk Seri Rosli Sulaiman, however, rebutted claims that the project had been shelved.

"The project has taken longer than it should, but several factors contributed towards its delay.

"The building is now 40% complete and we are hoping to resume construction by the end of this year," he said in an exclusive interview with *StarMetro*.

The tender for the integrated halal chicken abattoir was awarded to Sahih Group in 2018.

In a statement by then Federal Territories Ministry issued during the Right To Occupy (RTO) signing between DBKL and Sahih Group in 2018, construction of the chicken abattoir was estimated to take 18 months.

The statement also said that initial estimated costs for the project, at RM16mil, were to be



Mohd sources chickens from a slaughterhouse near the market in Chow Kit.

borne by Sahih Group through DBKL's privatisation initiative.

This was DBKL's effort to discourage traders from slaughtering chickens at the market site.

Kepong community activist Yee Poh Ping had, earlier last month, urged DBKL and the developer to provide an update on the project's progress, given its inactivity and how the site had become an eyesore.

The project had also received a number of public complaints and objections.

"Construction seemed to have halted since the first half of 2022 and its surroundings are overgrown with grass, suggesting that it has been left abandoned for quite some time.

"The authorities should prevent it from being a white elephant and public eyesore," said Yee.

Numerous delays

After the project was proposed eight years ago, several non-gov-

ernmental organisations and residents groups had protested against the abattoir that was approved by the Islamic Development Department (Jakim).

Among the objections were potential traffic congestion, its close proximity to residential neighbourhoods and concerns over possible bird flu virus outbreaks.

The disgruntled group even challenged Sahih Group in court in 2021.

Rosli said the case was recently resolved with a ruling in its favour.

"The court action was one of the factors that contributed to the project's delay.

"When the case was ongoing, we were not sure how it would affect the project.

"Although the plaintiffs did not apply for a stop-work order, we put construction on hold so that we would not lose our investment in the event we lost.

"Since the case was concluded last July, we can restart work at year end."

Rosli said the company had invested RM13mil in the project so far but projected that final costs would exceed initial estimations due to rising cost of building materials and machinery.

"We are unsure of the total cost now as we have not included the machinery and wastewater treatment plant that is to be built next to the centre."

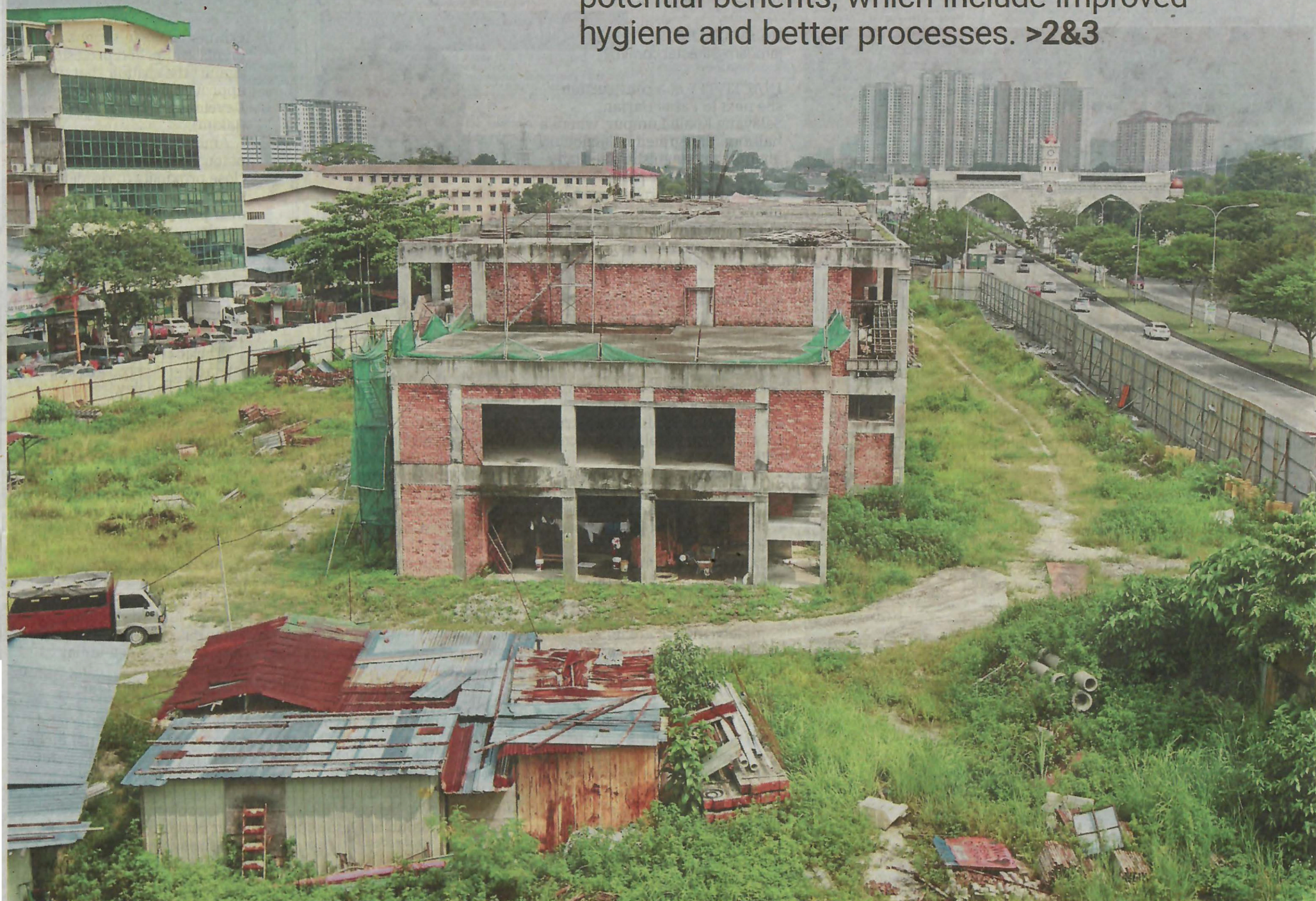
The project also faced several other challenges.

Rosli said in 2021, a group of devotees had trespassed onto the site to hold a Hungry Ghost festival celebration.

"They even built a huge tent on the site without permission.

Getting back on track

Construction work on the RM16mil integrated halal chicken abattoir project in Kuala Lumpur, stalled since early last year, will restart by year-end, says the developer. But poultry traders at wet markets seem unconvinced of its potential benefits, which include improved hygiene and better processes. >2&3



Eyesore: The chicken abattoir planned next to Pasar Harian Selayang Kuala Lumpur has been left abandoned since early 2022 owing to various factors. — KAMARUL ARIFFIN/The Star