



Regenerated Lorong Bandar 11 with a cute mural (left).



Performers entertaining crowds at Pentas Seni Merdeka, one of the highlights of the Kreatif KL Festival.



Regenerated Lorong Bandar 11 with a cute mural (left).

Taking Kuala Lumpur to greater artistic heights

Through conservation, greening and cultural activities, the capital is being rejuvenated as creative hub



An overview of the Pentas Seni Merdeka event beside Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which is one of the highlights of Kreatif KL Festival. — Photos: LEW GUAN XI/The Star and courtesy of Think City.

within this zone.

Downtown Kuala Lumpur forms the core of the masterplan and is made up of five precincts: Civic Precinct, Petaling Street Precinct, Heritage Triangle Precinct, Education Precinct and Traditional Shopping Precinct (see graphic).

Some areas that have been successfully regenerated, according to Hamdan, are Kwai Chai Hong (an alley off Jalan Panggung), Jalan Tun HS Lee (between Jalan Tun Perak and Jalan Gereja) and Lorong Bandar 11 in Lebuh Pudu (a lane that leads from Central Market to the Sin Sze Si Ya Temple).

These areas have reportedly benefitted from Think City

grants to rejuvenate and reactivate public spaces in the city.

The installation of green connectors have also been done throughout the KLCCD precincts.

One of the project highlights this year, Hamdan said, was the restoration of Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, which was built in the late 19th century and housed the British colonial administration offices.

“Conservation efforts will be led by Khazanah Nasional and Think City will be assisting.

“The surrounding area will have various art installations, performances and events.

“One such effort is the Pentas Seni Merdeka event,” he said.

A Khazanah spokesperson said

the ongoing redevelopment of Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad was being carried out in phases, with the first expected to be completed by 2026.

“The goal of the project is to ensure the original identity of historic buildings is preserved so that they can remain relevant for the future while adding appeal for visitors,” the spokesperson said in a statement to *StarMetro*.

In his Budget 2025 speech on Oct 18, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Khazanah had allocated RM600mil to conserve the iconic landmark as well as Carcosa Seri Negara.

“The seeds of regeneration we

planted have started to bloom. People can now see art galleries in downtown Kuala Lumpur as well as changes across places such as the Central Market,” Hamdan highlighted.

With the completion of the restoration projects, he suggested that the masterplan be expanded to restore historical buildings.

“We want to kick-start and catalyse the process of change through grants and collaboration with Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).”

He acknowledged there was room for improvement in terms of the city's walkability and public infrastructure as more visitors and investments were coming in.

“One of our focus areas is to



Hamdan: The seeds of regeneration we planted have started to bloom.



Izan Satrina: Festival theme aligns with the vision of Kuala Lumpur as a city of confluence.



(Above) Tourists having their photo taken at Kwai Chai Hong in Chinatown. (Right) A youngster playing traditional drum is part of the charm at 'Songket and Limar' textile exhibition.

Kuala Lumpur Creative and Cultural District flagships	
Dataran Merdeka Heritage Area (Civic Precinct)	
Masjid Jamek Enclave (Civic Precinct and Traditional Shopping Precinct)	
Trade Quadrant (Heritage Triangle Precinct)	
Fashion and Textile (Traditional Shopping Precinct)	
Carcosa Seri Negara (Botanical Gardens)	
Stadium Merdeka and Stadium Negara (Merdeka 118)	
Memorial Tun Abdul Razak (Botanical Gardens)	
Kuala Lumpur Train Station	

Source: Think City *The Star* graphics



and performances.

Art installations done by various agencies such as Malaysian Institute of Arts are also part of festivities.

“The inaugural festival, ongoing until Nov 30, features over 100 programmes with the aim of transforming downtown Kuala Lumpur into an artistic and cultural hub.

Set against the backdrop of Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad, Pentas Seni Merdeka is hosting various cultural performances.

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