

Dr Zaliha: I will ensure KL residents get their park

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EXCLUSIVE

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KUALA LUMPUR could soon welcome an exciting new urban park, part of ambitious plans to create a green sanctuary for city residents.

This vision, put forth by Dr Zaliha Mustafa, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department responsible for Federal Territories, is set to be a key feature of the Bandar Malaysia development.

In an exclusive interview, Dr Zaliha revealed that the site presented an ideal location for the proposed park – one that could rival the likes of New York City's Central Park or London's Hyde Park.

She also emphasised the critical need for city dwellers to have access to green spaces near their homes.

"In light of rapid urban development, there's an urgent need for parks within communities where people can rejuvenate their spirits and reconnect with nature.

"Green living is not just about sustainability; it's about quality of life.

"Parks close to home give



The 196ha Bandar Malaysia project offers a unique opportunity to transform Kuala Lumpur into a more liveable city. — Filepic

families a place to breathe, relax and connect with nature amid the urban hustle of the city.

"Everyone deserves the opportunity to step out of their homes and into a green sanctuary within minutes."

Dr Zaliha's passion for greenery aligns with her vision of fostering more sustainable and liveable urban environments.

With this commitment in mind, the minister aims to see a substantial urban park integrat-

ed into Kuala Lumpur's landscape and has urged the new owners of Bandar Malaysia to prioritise its inclusion in their development plans.

"Bandar Malaysia must include a park that serves the community and offers a green haven amid the urban sprawl.

"Balancing development with the needs of the people is vital."

StarMetro recently highlighted renewed calls from residents for the government to establish an urban park at the Bandar

Malaysia site.

This public appeal emerged following the cancellation of a proposed theme park project at the location.

Recent reports indicated that KLCC Property Holdings, a company linked to government interests through its major shareholder PETRONAS, had acquired the land for future development from Bandar Malaysia Sdn Bhd (a subsidiary of the Finance Ministry) and Bandar Malaysia Land Sdn Bhd.

Dr Zaliha said she had met with the previous owners of the site and reviewed their development plans.

"I was impressed by what I saw, as it included transit-oriented development, urban park and even a hospital.

"I look forward to meeting the new owners soon to gain insight into their plans for the project.

"I strongly urge them to include a park and a hospital, as these are essential components for a developing city.

"I promise to ensure Kuala Lumpur residents get their park," she added.

Last year, *StarMetro* reported that Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif highlighted the unique opportunity the Bandar Malaysia site offered in transforming Kuala Lumpur into a more liveable city.

She pointed out that the site's vast size allowed for the integra-

tion of sustainable urban planning principles, including green city concepts.

"When the project moves forward, we will ensure that developers strictly comply with guidelines on land use, density, zoning, facilities and open spaces," Maimunah had said.

In Parliament last year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim stated that the Bandar Malaysia development plan was under review before submission to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL). This review aimed to incorporate stakeholder feedback and ensure the project aligned with its objectives.

As one of the largest government-owned plots in central Kuala Lumpur, the development is expected to have a significant impact on the city's economy.

Anwar reiterated that the project must adhere to principles of responsible development, balancing environmental considerations with the need for affordable housing.

Located on the former Kuala Lumpur airbase in Sungai Besi, the 196ha Bandar Malaysia project, first announced in 2011, has faced numerous delays, with various proposals and deals falling through and changes in ownership.

The megaproject boasts a projected gross development value of RM140bil, and under Budget 2025, 20.23ha of the site will be gazetted as Malay reserve land.