

Urban Renewal Act aims to uplift lives, says PM

➤ ‘Land status to remain unchanged, whether privately owned, under state authority or Malay reserve land’

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim reiterated that the government’s move to introduce an Urban Renewal Act is rooted in the need to provide better living conditions for Malaysians long trapped in dilapidated housing.

He said the legal status of land involved in urban renewal projects would remain unchanged, regardless of whether it is privately owned, under state authority or located on Malay reserve land.

“There are people living in public housing flats that are over 50 years old, in overcrowded, uncomfortable conditions, plagued by serious social and disciplinary issues, all due to prolonged pressure and neglect.

“That is why it is our responsibility to focus on these areas and rebuild the housing. Unfortunately, this initiative is being politicised and falsely portrayed as an attempt to steal Malay land or as part of a so-called Chinese agenda to displace Malays from the city,” he said at the launch of the Warisan KL:

Warisan Ibu Kota Malaysia Madani project yesterday.

Present were Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa, Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Shamsul Azri Abu Bakar and Kuala Lumpur Mayor Datuk Seri Dr Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

Anwar cited the Seri Perlis flats as an example of poor living conditions, describing them as “most suffocating”.

“I wouldn’t be proud as prime minister if I couldn’t do something to rebuild and improve these homes.”

He said Kuala Lumpur City Hall would ensure that temporary housing for residents during the urban renewal projects would prioritise comfort and essential amenities.

Anwar gave an assurance that the development projects would be implemented as soon as they are approved, emphasising the importance of quick action to alleviate the suffering of affected families.

“Delaying the project by three months means prolonging the hardship of these families for three more months. To those causing the delays, I would send them to live in those temporary homes to experience firsthand the hardship and suffering of having to wait.”

Anwar had previously said urban renewal is not a new agenda under the Madani government but it had already begun in 2012 with the formulation of the Urban Renewal Guidelines.

He said initial discussions for the creation of a specific Urban Renewal Act began in 2013 to streamline development around Kuala Lumpur, with the formal drafting of the Act being announced in 2015.

The Warisan KL project aspires to position Kuala Lumpur through 10 flagship pilot developments, as a globally recognised creative city that is inclusive, connected and reflective of Malaysia’s identity.

The project also brings together key strategic partners, including Kuala Lumpur City Hall, Think City, Khazanah, government-linked companies, investment arms and players in the arts and culture scene to shape Kuala Lumpur as a city for all and a true reflection of the nation’s identity. – Bernama