

'KL not just a city of skyscrapers'

PM: Initiative will make capital ultra-modern while honouring its historical roots

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Warisan KL Initiative is an effort to develop the national capital into a city embracing modernity while honouring its historical roots, says the Prime Minister.

Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said Kuala Lumpur should reflect its legacy and not merely be a city of skyscrapers.

"A city must be fresh with interesting and attractive physical features that align with technological advancement and changes in times.

"It must also remain deeply rooted in tradition and culture," he said when officiating the Warisan KL initiative at Menara DBKL yesterday.

Under the "Warisan KL: Warisan Ibu Kota Malaysia Madani" initiative, KL will be revitalised through physical upgrades, cultural preservation, historical conservation and strengthened community values.

The project, a public-private effort led by DBKL and ThinkCity, aims to position KL through 10 flagship pilot projects as a globally recognised creative city that is inclusive, connected and reflective of Malaysia's identity.

Anwar said the heritage effort must ensure public comfort, green spaces, safety, scenic open fields and access for walking and cycling.

"This is our vision of a modern, new city – not for any particular class, but to serve the needs of all," he declared.

He said cities cannot just be all about big development projects, adding that it should also be about maintaining cleanliness.

"I want small but clean stalls which abide by strict regulations. That is why urban planning must be direct and thorough.

"It has to centre on the needs of a modern country while not sidelining the people," he added.

Anwar said there was no issue with promoting luxury hotels or restaurants, but added that it was equally important "not to marginalise the 80% of Malaysians who rely on street food and small eateries".

"That is why I emphasised to DBKL that small establishments, including stalls and warung that are clean and comply with regulations, be upgraded," he added.

Anwar also reiterated that the government's move to introduce the Urban Renewal Act was 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 the urban renewal projects will 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 added.

Also 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 Mayor Datuk Seri Dr Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

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