

KL sports complex status in limbo

Brickfields facility still not open to residents more than a year after its completion

By **BAVANI M**
bavanim@thestar.com.my

MORE than a year after the completion of the long-awaited Brickfields sports complex, the facility remains idle and untouched as it is still closed to the public.

The complex, built on the site of the former Kuala Lumpur City Hall Sports Club (KSDBKL) premises along Jalan Tun Sambanthan 1, was finally completed in early 2024 after years of pressure from residents.

But seven months into 2025, it has yet to open despite Kuala Lumpur City Hall's (DBKL) previous assurance to residents that the facility would open in January following the end of the defect liability period.

As of mid-July, the gates are still shut, the grass is overgrown and the field is slowly falling into disrepair.

"The community fought for this field for years.

"Now we finally have it, but we are locked out. It is baffling," said Brickfields Rukun Tetangga chairman SKK Naidu.

"A facility that is supposedly completed, is being left to grow wild while residents continue to play football on the streets," he said.

Long-time resident Dr Christopher Nicholas described the situation as a waste of public funds.

"It is not just a delay anymore, now it is neglect.

"We used to walk past the



Residents are still unable to utilise the 2.42ha site with a new football field, basketball court and futsal court more than a year after construction has been completed. — YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

place, hoping it would one day come alive with children playing, tournaments and community events.

"Instead, we are watching weeds take over while the place ages before it is even used.

"Why build a sports complex if you are going to treat it like a white elephant?" he said.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Safe City KL coordinator Ghani Mohamed echoed Dr Nicholas' frustration.

"The defect liability period has ended, and yet the facility is still

out of bounds to the people.

"DBKL must come clean and explain why the public is still not allowed in.

"This area has no proper sports facilities, no football field.

"People are forced to rent spaces outside Brickfields to play sports," he highlighted.

Resident K. Malar Devi described it as: "It is like building a house and refusing to move in until the warranty expires. Where is the logic there?"

"The field is ready. The people

are ready.

"Every month it sits unused, the cost of maintenance goes up, and the public loses.

"This isn't development, it is dysfunction," she noted.

In a statement issued to *StarMetro* in April last year, DBKL said the complex was completed in early 2024 and would be managed by its Culture, Arts, Tourism and Sports Department.

The local authority said the field was expected to open to the public by January 2025, after the



Ghani: People are forced to rent spaces outside Brickfields to play sports.

defect liability period, to ensure the facility was in good condition for public use.

StarMetro had earlier reported on the acute shortage of playing fields and open spaces in Kuala Lumpur, especially in densely populated areas like Brickfields.

Former mayor Datuk Seri Mahadi Che Ngah had promised to restore the demolished field, approving plans for a new complex on the former DBKL sports club site.

The restoration was to include toilets, changing rooms, a parking area and other supporting facilities.

Built in 1970, the former DBKL sports club was once a key venue for City Hall staff and the Kuala Lumpur football team in the 1980s.

It hosted local football legends including Rashid Hassan, Razip Ismail, Chow Siew Yai and Fandi Ahmad.