



MAJLIS PERBANDARAN AMPANG JAYA
BAHAGIAN PERHUBUNGAN AWAM DAN SEKRETARIAT
MENARA MPAJ, JALAN PANDAN UTAMA,
PANDAN INDAH, SELANGOR,
55100 KUALA LUMPUR

KERATAN AKHBAR
16 OKTOBER 2019 (RABU)

AKHBAR

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The Star

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By **SHALINI RAVINDRAN**
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THE double-storey terrace houses were huge, some with extravagant columns, decorative front doors and luxury cars in the compound, giving an impression that it was an affluent area.

The houses, which were equipped with running water and electricity, were backdropped by a lush forested area and even had a river flowing nearby.

In truth, the occupants of these houses in Kampung Sungai Chinchin were foreigners with permanent resident (PR) status and their houses were illegally constructed on other people's land.

A year-long investigation by Selayang Municipal Council (MPS) showed that some 4.04ha of land had been recklessly cleared to make way for the houses without approval from the council or the rightful landowners.

According to MPS, the area was designated as agricultural land and the owners were unaware that their land had been encroached.

MPS deputy president Datuk Dr Juhari Ahmad said the entire hillside was cleared without any safeguards in place and was the cause of frequent mud floods in the area.

"They have cut down the trees and damaged the slopes. Worse still, the hill was left exposed and could result in a landslide if nothing was done.

"The recent land clearing had turned the usually clear Sungai Semampus murky and shallow," he said.

Some of the residents had also trespassed into the river reserve by building riverside shacks and operating a chicken farm.

The river was filled with construction debris and there were also signs of erosion on the hills as trees had fallen over.

Juhari said repeated notices to the perpetrators to stop clearing the land and vacate had been ignored, forcing the council to take action.

MPS identified 14 illegal structures and demolished nine of these partially-completed buildings during a 150-personnel

Bungalows torn down

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Council takes action after foreigners clear private agricultural land to build houses in Gombak



Juhari (in blue) says repeated notices issued to the perpetrators to stop land clearing and vacate the land were ignored.

strong operation which was carried out with Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) and Syabas.

He added that the council had the right under Act 172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 to demolish or remove such unauthorised buildings.

The building owners were given notice under Section 70 of the Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 before the demolition was carried out.

"Those building the houses could not produce any legal documents to prove they were the owners," he said.

The council suspects the land was being cleared to be sold to buyers without the knowledge of the rightful owners.

"There is a syndicate selling land to unsuspecting buyers for between RM30,000 and RM40,000 or around 3,000sq ft per plot.

"Then when we conduct inspections, they realise they have been cheated. The occupants had no rights to the land and unfortunately some of them had paid for something that was not

theirs," Juhari said.

Bigger consequences

It was not only that the illegal land clearing and land occupation that is of concern, as water quality specialist Dr Zaki Zainudin pointed out.

He said illegal land clearing had far-reaching impact on the rivers.

"When there is illegal land clearing there is usually a lack of proper erosion and sediment control measures.

"With increased sedimentation and siltation in the rivers from land-clearing activities, there is increased turbidity and the colour of the river is like 'teh tarik'.

"The sediment will also settle at the bottom of the river and make it shallower, which means it would hold less water and this increases the risk of flooding in the area and downstream," he said.

Zaki said the suspended solids would also destroy aquatic life in the rivers by clogging the gills of fish and affecting propagation sites.

He added that water quality would also be affected as harmful

metals were introduced into the river.

"Most of the soil contains iron, manganese, arsenic and aluminium, and when there is erosion from land clearing or river sand mining activities, these metals will be transported into the river and pollute it," he explained.

He also pointed out that as one of the tributaries of Sungai Gombak, any contamination of Sungai Semampus could compromise the government's multi-billion ringgit River of Life project (RoL).

The aim was to transform the RoL stretch from its current Class III and Class IV water quality (not suitable for body contact) to Class IIB (suitable for body contact and recreational usage) by 2020.

"In the Gombak basin area alone, several lands upstream have been found to be impacting river quality, including erosion from illegal land clearing and river sand mining.

"All these activities have a cumulative impact on river water," he said.



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Kerjasama awam, swasta bantu sektor infrastruktur

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Pinjaman modal swasta biayai pelbagai projek pembangunan

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Penjanaan modal swasta melalui perkongsian awam-swasta akan menjadi cabaran kepada kerajaan yang selama ini masih komited membiayai sendiri projek infrastruktur negara.

Firma penyelidikan, Fitch Solutions Macro Research (Fitch Solutions), berkata perkembangan dalam ruang kerjasama awam swasta dilihat dapat meningkat-

kan pertumbuhan sektor infrastruktur negara.

"Komitmen pembiayaan awam untuk pembangunan infrastruktur menyokong pandangan kami mengenai sektor pembinaan Malaysia akan mencatatkan pertumbuhan yang kukuh.

"Kita akan menantikan laporan mengenai beberapa projek yang digantung, dengan keputusan mengenai Sistem Transit Rapid (RTS) Johor-Singapura dijangkakan dimuktamadkan menjelang akhir Oktober ini," katanya dalam satu kenyataan.

Dalam pembentangan Belanjaan 2020 baru-baru ini, Menteri Kewangan, Lim Guan Eng mencadangkan jumlah perbelanjaan sebanyak RM297.02 bilion dengan perbelanjaan pembangunan meningkat 5.6 peratus ke-

pada RM56 bilion.

Pengeluaran pembangunan yang lebih tinggi akan disalurkan untuk membiayai bekalan elektrik luar bandar di Sabah dan Sarawak, membina dan membaik pulih hospital serta menaik taraf lapangan terbang serta inisiatif lain di kawasan luar bandar.

"Secara keseluruhannya, belanjawan itu akan menyokong pertumbuhan sektor pembinaan Malaysia dalam jangka pendek. Kawasan luar bandar akan menjadi pihak yang mendapat manfaat terbesar, dengan sokongan kewangan yang kuat untuk banyak projek.

"Sabah dan Sarawak akan menjadi penerima manfaat utama, dengan sekitar 80 peratus daripada RM580 juta yang akan dibelanjakan untuk projek di kedua-dua

negeri ini.

"Perbelanjaan kerajaan yang dirancang dalam infrastruktur sektor air dan pengangkutan adalah sejajar dengan tinjauan positif kami untuk sektor ini.

"Tinjauan kami sebelum ini meramalkan potensi pertumbuhan kukuh sektor infrastruktur jalan di Sarawak dan Sabah dengan perbelanjaan bagi projek seperti Lebuhraya Pan Borneo akan diteruskan dengan sokongan kewangan kerajaan," katanya.

Selain infrastruktur pengangkutan, Fitch Solutions berkata kerajaan turut memperuntukkan lebih daripada RM580 juta kepada projek air luar bandar, sekali lagi, menyokong pandangan pihaknya bahawa pelaburan ke sektor air Malaysia akan didorong terutamanya oleh sektor awam.