

17/01/1997

RM16m to resettle Sungai Kayu Ara squatters

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Selangor Government will spend RM16 million to rehabilitate Sungai Kayu Ara and resettle squatters now living along the river to safer grounds.

This will be the first of Selangor's 250,000 squatter population to be relocated following a directive by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to have all riverside settlements resited after a flood which hit Sabah's interior of Keningau killed more than 200 people living along a river.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Taib said some of the squatters along Sungai Kayu Ara would be relocated to rented houses similar to those built by the State in Ampang Jaya and Klang.

He did not say when the relocation exercise - to be carried out by the Petaling Jaya Municipal Council - would begin.

"We have too many squatters in Selangor. We cannot relocate them because there is not enough land."

At least 20,000 new squatters moved into the State every year, Muhammad said after launching the Brunfield Country Homes Project, a 150ha mixed housing development near Bukit Beruntung.

"Another problem with relocating these settlements is that it will break up communities.

"For instance, the children will have to be moved to another school or the husband and wife may run into problems commuting to the workplace."

Muhammad said in order to resettle these squatters, the overall scenario had to be taken into consideration, the most pertinent being an efficient public transportation system.

Establishing satellite towns outside the main hub in the Klang Valley would also attract people to move out from densely populated areas, he added.

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