

**Dr M warns of pitfalls in developing Kg Baru**  
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Former Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned that the Najib administration's plans to develop Kampung Baru in Kuala Lumpur may be detrimental to the Malay community.

Mahathir said that from his experience, there were problems in determining the price of Kampung Baru's land as well as locating landowners who had left the area or had passed away.

Making matters worse, some landowners wanted to sell their land for too high a price which would have resulted in higher development costs.

"Thus Malays won't be able to own shops or residential properties after it was constructed. Perhaps only non-Malays would be able to afford them.

"If the properties are being sold to non-Malays, then Kampung Baru's (status) as a Malay enclave in Kuala Lumpur will be lost," said Mahathir in a post on his blog today.

**Ensure Malays stay on**

Mahathir, who once ruled Malaysia for 22 years, said that a solution to this problem lies with compelling developers to provide homes and shops for landowners.

"This condition can ensure that Malays to remain (in Kampung Baru) and continue to stay there. They will not be evicted," he said.

However, he conceded that this plan might increase the cost of development and possibly turn off Malay developers.

He adds that non-Malay developers might also shun developing Kampung Baru because the locals have low purchasing power.

"Even today, there are a lot of residential and commercial properties allocated to Malays but they cannot afford them," he lamented.

**Change Kg Baru's image**

In conclusion, Mahathir said that he was "praying" for the current administration to succeed in developing Kampung Baru in order to prevent visitors from witnessing the poor condition of the village.

"In a city full of modern and luxurious skyscrapers, there lies a village full of Malay squatters in wooden houses and rusted zinc roofs," said Mahathir.

He said that he had tried, and failed, to develop Kampung Baru and hoped that the current administration will fare better.

According to the amended Kuala Lumpur Draft Plan 2020, the entire 379 acres land in

Kampung Baru has been earmarked as one of three City Commercial Centres (CCC).

Furthermore, the federal government has also tabled the Kampung Baru Development Corporation 2010 bill at the Dewan Rakyat last month.

Once the bill is passed, the federal government will establish Kampung Baru Development Corp (KBDC). The bill will be debated in March.

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