

Zambry: Sitiawan land acquisition move is off
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The Dindings Indian Association (DIA) will get to keep its two-hectare plot of prime land in Sitiawan after all, now that the Perak government has backed off a move to acquire the site.

Menteri Besar Zambry Abd Kadir was quoted as saying that the state government has revoked the decision, as it understands the high sentimental value of the land to the Indian community.

He blamed an oversight by an education ministry officer, who had overlooked the historical value of the land to the Indian community.

The state governzambry abdul kadir interviewment was not notified about this, claimed Zambry (left), who has directed state MIC head S Veerasingam to meet the Manjung Land and Mine District Office to revoke the gazetting of the land.

The Education Ministry had wanted the site to build the SRK Simpang Empat.

Despite Zambry's announcement, the outcome can only be formalised on Aug 25 when the Land Office decides on the matter. The date had originally picked for the formal acquisition hearing.

The cabinet had today also agreed to Zambry's decision to not to pursue the DIA land for the construction of a new school .

The matter was brought up by MIC vice-president and Human Resources Minister S Subramiam.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhiyiddin Yassin had agreed with Zambry as land matters come under state jurisdiction.

Demo to go on

Commenkulasegaranting on Zambry's announcement, DAP national vice-chief M Kulasegaran described it as a victory "for the united and determined Indian community" in Sitiawan.

He noted that the Sungai Wangi Estate, which belongs to the government-linked Sime Darby group, is located about a half-kilometre from the DIA-owned site.

About 15 years ago, the Defence Ministry had acquired some land from the estate to build an airport, he said.

Kulasegaran suggested that part of the site be used for the proposed school, saying this would also resolve the potential problem of traffic jams if it is located in the heart of town.

He added that a peaceful demonstration will proceed as scheduled next Wednesday, until the authorities officially notify the community of Zambry's decision.

The DAP will go house-to-house to distribute pamphlets and information on the proposed

acquisition.

NONEKulasp ramasamyegaran and two other Sitiawan-born DAP leaders - Penang Deputy Chief Minister II P Ramasamy (left) and Padang Serai MP N Gobalakrishnan (right) - had worked to prevent the takeover of the land.

It had been collectively bought with contributions from pioneer Indian rubber-tappers from the 35 estates in Sitiawan in the 1930s.

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