

**Declare Dindings land 'Little India' site, says group
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The Committee Against the Acquisition of Dindings Indian Heritage Land (CAADIHL) wants the Perak government to declare the Dindings Indian Association's (DIA) 2.2 hectare plot of prime land in Sitiawan as a "Little India" site.

The proposed Little India site will be the base for further and future growth of Indian culture and the like to promote Indian heritage in the district.

The committee also hopes the government will provide financial assistance to make this dream a reality.

These are some of the proposals outlined by the CAADIHL in the NONEmemorandum of protest that was handed over to the Manjung Land Office yesterday afternoon.

The memorandum is to put on record the stand, sentiments and the demands of the local Indian community on the proposed move to acquire the Indian heritage land.

According to DAP national vice-chief and state deputy chief M Kulasegaran, the 30-member group waited one hour for district land officer Ahmad Shafee, or his assistant, to hand over the memorandum, but they did not show up.

Finally, a land office staff member who accepted the memorandum told the group, which included DAP state chief Ngeh Koo Ham, that the acquisition of the Indian heritage land would proceed, unless it was rescinded by Menteri Besar Zambry Abd Kadir.

CAADIHL also plans to hold a peaceful demonstration outside the Manjung Land Office on Aug 25.

The cabinet at its meeting on Wednesday said it would not support the development of the 80-year-old DIA site, which is the pride of the Indian community in Sitiawan.

Role of Indian affairs adviser questioned

Kulasegaran also questioned the miscommunication between the state government and the Education Ministry, which wants to build a primary school, SRK Simpang Empat, on the site.

"Why didn't the Perak BN Indian affairs adviser S Veerasingam tell Zambry about the historical value of the DIA site? Or was it a case of Veerasingam just going along with the state's decision to acquire the land?" asked the DAP Ipoh Barat MP.

Kulasegaran and two other Sitiawan-born Pakatan leaders - Penang Deputy Chief Minister II P Ramasamy and Padang Serai MP N Gobalakrishnan - have been working to prevent the takeover of the land.

The land had been bought in the 1930s, with contributions from Indian rubber tappers from 35 estates around Sitiawan.

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