

PM Promises Goodies For Kampung Folks In The City
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KUALA LUMPUR -- Prime Minister Najib Razak dangled another goody when he declared the transformation of Kampung Baru into a modern high-value neighbourhood. This will be sparked off with the renovation of the iconic Jamek Mosque in the heart of the city centre.

The PM again resorted to using 1Malaysia Development Berhad, one of his favourite vehicle, to contribute RM20 million to turn the mosque into an icon of transformation that will begin within 6 months.

Pundits are busy deciphering if this is a populist move to capture the support of voters in the Malay heartland located within the urban KL on time for the "soon-to-be-held general elections".

"This year will be the start of a new era for Kampung Baru," Najib declared when launching the Mosque Visit programme at the Kampung Baru Masjid Jamek here.

Najib said the development of Kampung Baru was to give its residents high economic value by upgrading the property to the same level as the surrounding areas.

If Kampung Baru is not developed, land owners would only get only a fraction of what their property was worth potentially, Najib said.

Ikampungbarun developing Kampung Baru, the condition was for the residents not to move elsewhere, he said to residents who may not be aware that they may not be able to unlock the value of their land if they do not sell their property, although they may enjoy the amenities the development brings.

Left undeveloped, Najib said, "Kampung Baru would resemble a squatter area surrounded by sky scrappers, left behind by a fast-moving metropolis".

Residents of Kampung Baru are encouraged, if not co-opted into the development programme through their representatives in a soon to be set-up corporation. This is to ensure that what was done was transparent and without any ill intentions.

Najib said government-linked companies such as Permodalan Nasional Berhad and Lembaga Tabung Haji will be involved in the development.

Najib said the Kampung Baru Corporation Bill will be tabled in Parliament in March.

Elaborating on the renovation of the Masjid Jamek, he said the plan had been studied and the appointment of the contractor would be left to the mosque committee.

Despite heavy rain, about 3,000 attended the event, where Najib also launched the 1Masjid Kampung Baru youth club.

The PM also launched Mercu Zikay Kampung Baru, a 40-storey tower to be built in the heart of Kampung Baru. When completed, it will house 289 hotel suites and 130 service

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