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# KL's oldest mosque renamed Masjid Jamek Sultan Abdul Samad

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The oldest mosque in the city, Masjid Jamek, has been renamed Masjid Jamek Sultan Abdul Samad.

Selangor Ruler Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah renamed the building after his ancestor – the fourth Sultan of Selangor Almarhum Sultan Abdul Samad ibni Almarhum Raja Abdullah – as the mosque was originally built on Selangor land.

The ceremony before Friday prayers was also attended by Raja Muda Selangor Tengku Amir Shah, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom and Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azmin Ali.

In a statement, Tengku Adnan said the re-branding was part of an initiative to preserve national heritage.

He said the mosque – located at the confluence of the Klang River and Gombak River – was refurbished as part of the River of Life (ROL) project, and could now host up to 1,000 people for prayers.

“The *jemaah* (congregation) praying here need no longer face the heat, thanks to the giant shades installed outside the building,” he said, adding that it was inspired by the giant hydraulic shades at Masjid Nabawi, in Madinah.



**Preserving heritage:** Sultan Sharafuddin arriving at the mosque accompanied by (from right) Tengku Amir, Azmin and Najib for the renaming ceremony in Kuala Lumpur.

Imam Muhd Hafiz Mohd Arif, 25, said the mosque could only fit 400 people before the prayer area's roof was expanded.

“The name Masjid Jamek comes from the Arab word *'jamek'* meaning to gather, in reference to how people would gather here for the Friday prayers,” he said.

Muhd Hafiz, who has been the mosque's

*bilal* (caller to prayer) for the last five years, said the mosque was declared a National Heritage site in 2005, thus the renovation works were only meant to refresh and improve the facilities rather than overhauling the mosque.

Malaysian Institute of Architects heritage and conservation committee chairman Datuk

Zulkhairi Md Zain said preserving the name “Masjid Jamek” with the addition of a new name “Sultan Abdul Samad” was a good move.

“The new name will further amplify the contribution of the late Sultan Abdul Samad in developing and spreading Islamic teaching in Selangor,” he said.

Zulkhairi said there were several other Masjid Jameks in the Klang Valley such as Masjid Jamek Pakistan in Sentul and Masjid Jamek Jamiul Ehsan in Shah Alam, with each name showing a significant part of history related to its founder and location.

“Anyone who hears Masjid Jamek's new name will automatically associate it with something historical and of important heritage value because the name Sultan Abdul Samad is already very important and popular in the history of Selangor and Malaya,” he said.

The architect confirmed that the mosque, which opened in 1909, was designed by architect Arthur Benison Hubback in the Indian Mughal Architectural style.

Although it now shares a name with the equally historic Sultan Abdul Samad building nearby, Hubback was not involved in the latter's design.

Watch the video  
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