

**Taman Tugu among Steps to Turn KL into A World Class City - Najib
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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- The transformation of the National Monument or Tugu Negara area to a city rainforest (Taman Tugu) is among efforts towards turning Kuala Lumpur into a world class city, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said the 26.7 hectare project, in which its first phase is to be completed mid 2018, was aimed at adding recreational spots for the city's dwellers.

"This is a something we cannot reject. We are now striving towards that (turning Kuala Lumpur to a world-class city).

"We will spend RM60billion for the MRT project, RM10 billion for LRT extension, RM4.4b illion for the River of Life project and also for the High Speed Rail link (between KL and Singapore) which will be realised in few more years," he said when launching the Taman Tugu Project, here, Sunday.

Also present were his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor and Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar.

Najib also expressed hope that the Taman Tugu would one day be synonymous to Kuala Lumpur as how the Hyde Park was synonymous to London and the Central Park, to New York.

The prime minister also reminded the relevant parties involved in the construction of the Taman Tugu to preserve its historical values, including the National Monument.

"And let us not forget about Nasi Lemak Tang Lin. I remember how I used to ride my bicycle without being escorted just to buy the nasi lemak here, which was then priced at 30sen . This is among the values that can be preserved," he said.

In a bid to ensure that the park would meet the demand of the public, Najib said the government welcomed any suggestions on what kind of facilities to be set up in the area, as well as suitable names for it.

"This is an exciting project. An integrated effort of numerous parties. With the various facilities, it will turn into a park with tropical rainforest characteristics in no time. With its flora and fauna...can you imagine that?" he said.

Najib said in the future, world leaders who came to visit Malaysia would also be invited to plant a tree in the park.

The project is a Khazanah Nasional Berhad's (Khazanah) corporate social responsibility (CSR) project with the cooperation of several ministries and private companies.

It will be implemented on RM2.1 billion worth of land at an estimated cost of RM650 million, 75 per cent or RM500 millions of which will be funded by Khazanah.

Among the facilities to be provided is a pedestrian deck, which will connect the park with KL Sentral.

Meanwhile, Khazanah managing director Tan Sri Azman Mokhtar said one of the main components of the projects involved the conservation of 1,000 rainforest trees and the planting of 5,000 new ones.

He said the Taman Tugu would provide various world-class facilities in specific zones related to environment, recreation and education, including a rainforest information centre, campsite, canopy walk and zip line, water games area, jogging and cycling tracks, gazebo and observation deck, as well as a food court.

Besides, Azman said the park would also have a library, auditorium, gallery and halls that could be used for meetings and certain events.

"The Taman Tugu project is also designed with the aim to connect various main areas, in line with the vision to turn the federal capital into a world class metropolis under the Greater Kuala Lumpur initiative," he added.

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