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New area not commercially viable

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Proposed relocation of Sungai Buloh nurseries leaves much to be desired

WHAT has become of the horticultural nursery relocation programme by the Perbadanan Kemajuan Pertanian Selangor (PKPS)?

The new 24.28ha nursery site in Bukit Changgang near Banting, Selangor to replace the one in Green Lane Kota Damansara, was scheduled to be completed last year.

However, apart from the initial site clearance in Bukit Changgang early last year, no other infrastructural or improvement works have taken place. The site is now overgrown with bushes and shrubs and resembles a mini-jungle.

The nursery owners, who were allotted a quarter of an acre land each, had signed the tenancy agreement and settled the relevant payments last year.

The monthly rental for the lots is RM300.

Many owners consider the Bukit Changgang location commercially unviable and too far from their present site in the Green Lane Kota Damansara in Sungai Buloh.

Since they had no other alternative, many of them agreed to relocate and were given a one-year temporary reprieve last year in their present site until the Bukit Changgang site is ready for occupation.

However, the PKPS and the state government have not taken any urgent steps to expedite development of the Bukit Changgang site.

Due to the long delay the nursery owners, at the existing site, are facing uncertainty and doubt and many have slowed down their business.

The area has become unkempt, some have abandoned their plots and no new investments have been made to continue their business.

The owners cannot move to the new site unless adequate infrastructure such as access roads, electricity and water connections are made.



Nurseries along Jalan Sungai Buloh are to be relocated to Banting. — Filepic

A survey also needs to be done to demarcate individual plot boundaries. The low-lying new site has also been rumoured to be prone to flooding and this has led to worries and hesitancy on the part of the nursery owners.

A better nursery site closer to Sungai Buloh will be a good option for them.

If the present site is not needed for any further road expansion, then let them stay and officially give them the permission to continue their business without being worried about any eviction.

The issue of the relocation of the nurseries has not been proactively or sympathetically handled by the authorities concerned, and this is the main reason why the once thriving horticultural business in Green Lane Kota Damansara has met a dead end.

In some countries, a nursery hub is planned in a way that it becomes a major business and tourist attraction, and earning the government substantial revenue.

The horticultural business is touted as one of the main thrusts to cope with climate change and environmental rehabilitation.

All three phases of the relocation exercise beginning in 2017 has been done haphazardly and without thought of the consequences of relocation.

Sungai Buloh is famous for its horticultural industry and such disorganised relocations could ruin the industry.

Many nursery owners in the Green Lane Nursery Centre had to close down their business.

Some were given non-existent relocation sites, some not given temporary occupation licence (TOL) and a few ended



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up having to rent lots at a TNB transmission reserve in Petaling Jaya.

There was also a case where five nursery owners were required to make way for a slip road to a highway.

But ultimately, it was found that there was no need for them to do so.

The vacant land, comprising five lots, is now used for the dumping of rubbish and has become an unkempt brushland.

Five nursery owners have lost their livelihood.

They were promised an ex-gratia compensation, which has not been settled yet despite persistent requests.

The five nursery owners should be allowed to reclaim their now vacant lots as they have not got any replacement lots or ex-gratia payment.

The whole episode of the relocation of the nurseries smacks of indifference and poor long-term planning.

This has killed off the once vibrant and thriving Green Lane Kota Damansara horticultural business centre.

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