

River project to transform KL

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KUALA LUMPUR: With the launch of a RM4 billion river cleaning up and beautification project yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak hopes Kuala Lumpur will eventually become one of the great cities in the world.

However, he said the project required not just physical development but a change in the people's thinking and attitude, especially towards rivers.

The RM4 billion Sungai Klang that flows through the city as an urbanised natural asset that feeds the economic activities is vibrant and beautiful, representative of the high standards of the city.

Identified as an Urban River Project under the Greater Kuala Lumpur River Valley (GKLRV) Development Plan, the RM4 billion project seeks to transform Sungai Klang and Sungai Gombak into an urban waterway at par with those in cities like London, Paris, Melbourne and Amsterdam by 2020.

Apart from sewage being channelled into the river, Najib said about 1.26 million sq metres of parking also found its way into Sungai Klang annually, but the authorities managed to wrap up only 25 spaces.

Under the Sungai Klang River project to boost tourism, the goal is to have a canalised and tidy river, a small river, complete with beautiful walkways, bridges and fountains," he said, when launching the River of Life project here yesterday.

The River of Life project comprises three components, which are the cleaning up, beautification and river canal development, along the river corridor. The cleaning up will be completed along a 1.5km stretch throughout the Klang river basin.

The idea is to improve water quality from the current Class III to Class II, which would make the river suitable



RM4-billion River Beautification project in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — NST pictures by Anwarul Karim

for recreational activities by 2020.

A sum of RM2 billion had been allocated for the clean-up and beautification works.

The transformation of the river will include beautification of the river banks from Telok Anson to BUKU.

The Kuala Lumpur City Hall held a River of Life River plan competition that ended on June 13 and they have shortlisted two of the 22 entries.

There are three international firms

partner with two from local planning companies.

The winning plans are available for the public to view and vote at [www.riveroflifeproject.org](#) — from today until July 28.

A panel of expert jurors have also been appointed to assess the plans. The winning plans will be based on a combination of votes from the public and jurists and the jurors will be announced on July 28.