

**PLANNING  
SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
IN MALAYSIA**

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**Issues and Challenges**



MARIANA MOHAMED OSMAN  
ALIAS ABDULLAH  
MOHAMMAD ABDUL MOHIT  
AZILA AHMAD SARKAWI



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## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROVISION OF *MUSALLĀ* FACILITIES IN SELECTED MULTI-LEVEL SHOPPING COMPLEXES OF KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

*Mohammad Abdul Mohit and Suraiya Binti Alisaa*

#### ABSTRACT

Multi-level shopping complexes which provide a multitude of facilities to shoppers, are growing in Kuala Lumpur at a very fast rate. However, due to the absence of JPBD guidelines, *musallā* (prayer place) facilities in these modern shopping complexes have been indiscriminately provided. This paper focuses on the location of *musallā* and related facilities in a few selected shopping complexes of Kuala Lumpur; examines users' perceptions about the provision of *musallā* facilities and finally, provides suggestions based upon users' views about the appropriate provision of *musallā* facilities in the shopping complexes.

**Key Words:** *musallā*; multi-level shopping complex; facility; town and country planning department (JPBD); users' perception.

#### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, multi-level shopping complexes following the American-style shopping malls (Maitlad 1990; Ghosh and McLafferty 1991) are growing in and around Kuala Lumpur at a rapid rate. The emergence of hypermarkets for convenience shopping and mega malls for general and recreational shopping at the outskirts of the City has started to change the pattern of retail development in Kuala Lumpur (CHKL 2003:7-3). These shopping complexes provide a multitude of facilities to shoppers, such as shopping area, child play area, food stalls, praying place, etc.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, available literature indicates that the *musallā* (prayer place) facilities,<sup>2</sup> have been indiscriminately provided and serviced within the modern shopping complexes (Utusan Malaysia, 2002). The following internet communication presents a scenario of *musallā* facilities provided in the shopping complexes in Malaysia:

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<sup>1</sup> A shopping centre is a one-stop commercial outlet that offers a mix of merchandises and services. It provides on-site parking and the centre's size and orientation are generally determined by the market characteristics of the trade that are served by the centre (Levy and Weitz 1998: 5).

<sup>2</sup> A *musallā* (or *jamāt khāna*) literally means a place where prayer is performed or where congregations are held temporarily (Abdur Rahman Ibn Yusuf 2005: 1). JPBD (Town and Country Planning Department) defines *musallā* as one type of mosque that is only used as a place for prayer. According to JPBD, there is a hierarchy of growth centers and praying places in which *musallā* service exists at the 5<sup>th</sup> level of hierarchy – beyond the Mukim mosque but above the prayer room. *Musallās* in Malaysia can be found in small neighbourhood centre, village, residential area/ focal point/commercial centre, government office, airport, bus station, etc. (JPBD 1997a: 1 &14).