A COMPREHENDIUM OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING STUDIES IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF MALAYSIA

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CONTENTS

Contents
List of Tables
List of Figures
Foreword
Preface
Contributors

Page No.
v
vii
viii
ix
x
xii

CHAPTER 1: KUALA LUMPUR DRAFT CITY PLAN 2020 LOCAL INQUIRY: AN ANALYSIS OF ITS SHORTCOMINGS
Alias Abdullah, Zulaikha Nurulzuhri Zahar and Muhammad Faris Abdullah

CHAPTER 2: RESIDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF SAFETY OF BACKLANES AT TERRACED-HOUSING AREAS IN KUALA LUMPUR
Alias Abdullah, Nurul Hana Mustaffa and Muhammad Faris Abdullah

CHAPTER 3: EFFECTIVENESS OF NOISE BARRIERS IN RESIDENTIAL AREA: A CASE STUDY OF USJ 3/1 AND USJ/2 OF SUBANG JAYA, SELANGOR DARUL EHSAN
Mansor Ibrahim and Mohd Azli Ngateman

CHAPTER 4: MANAGING STORMWATER THROUGH LANDSCAPE DESIGN FOR URBAN SUSTAINABILITY
Mohd Faiz Musa, Ismawi Hj. Zen, and Izawati Tukiman

CHAPTER 5: PROBLEMS OF ALLEVIATING POVERTY IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs)
Lukman Hakim Mahamod

v
CHAPTER 6: MALAYSIA URBAN INDICATORS NETWORK (MURNlnet) IN THE CONTEXT OF MAQASID AL-SHARIAH: AN OVERVIEW
Nurul Aida Salim, Azila Ahmad Sarkawi and Alias Abdullah

CHAPTER 7: ZAKAT IN MALAYSIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Lukman Hakim Mahamod

CHAPTER 8: INEQUALITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CENTRALIZING ZAKAT COLLECTION: A CASE STUDY OF PADANG TERAP DISTRICT OF KEDAH
Lukman Hakim Mahamod

CHAPTER 9: THE AWARENESS AND PRACTICES OF 3R AMONG STUDENTS TOWARDS WASTE REDUCTION
Mariana Mohamed Osman and Siti Rohayu Yusof

CHAPTER 10: A REVIEW ON SIMULATION MODEL OF CROWD MOVEMENT DURING INGRESS AND EGRESS OF STADIUM
Syahriah Bachok and Zulfadly Aziz Bohari
INTRODUCTION

One of the priorities in the concept of zakat is that its proceeds should be distributed in the locality where it has been collected, particularly among the poor. However, any zakat surplus can be used to help asnabs elsewhere. For example, in the state of Kedah, every district must give priority to helping its own needy population with the zakat collected before distributing it to others. In Kedah, the zakat collection in the rubber-based districts is small. Furthermore, there is widespread poverty among the rubber tappers compared with other sectors of the economy. The district of Padang Terap, whose economy is based on rubber, is a typical example. The total zakat collected is not sufficient to alleviate poverty effectively, nor is there a surplus to distribute among other asnabs. However, the centralization of the zakat collection means that any surplus of zakat from other districts can be distributed among the asnabs in Padang Terap.

PADANG TERAP: ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Padang Terap is an administrative district, where the village used as a case study for this discussion. It comprises about 1,357 sq. km, representing 14.4 per cent of the total area of Kedah. It is the third largest district in Kedah, which consists of 12 mukims (sub-regions) and 114 traditional villages (see Map 4.1). Padang Terap is situated on the east side of Kedah, with the districts of Sik, Pendang and Baling. The eastern parts of these districts are hilly areas that run from southern Thailand in the north through eastern Kedah and western Perak to Dindings in the south. In Padang Terap, about 58.7 per cent of its land is 75 metres above sea level (Majlis Daerah Padang Terap, 2002).

MALAY RUBBER SECTOR AND POVERTY

Majority of the population Padang Terap are Malay, agriculture is the main occupation. The status of Padang Terap as an agricultural district also can be seen in its land use: about 42 per cent of the land is used for agriculture. It is the second largest land use after forestry, which covers 50 per cent of the total area of Padang Terap (Majlis Daerah Padang Terap, 2002).