

# Reprieve for old Rawang bungalow

Court allows family to stay on in 97-year-old house until Sept 28

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THE Sidhu Brar family now has until Sept 28 to move out of their 97-year-old Rawang bungalow.

The Shah Alam High Court, which had earlier ordered them to vacate the premises before Sept 20, yesterday granted their appeal for a stay.

There may still be hope for the family as the National Heritage Department (JWN) visited their home last Thursday to determine its historical importance.

Maljindar Singh Sidhu Brar, who spoke on behalf of the family, said since JWN was doing its evaluation, the family had submitted a stay order to the Shah Alam High Court on Sept 5.

"We gathered 129 family members to take a family photo in front of the bungalow on Aug 27 and view the home one last time in the event we have to move out.

"It was very emotional for everyone," he said.

JWN heritage registration director Mohamad Muda Bahadin said the visit was to evaluate the bungalow's importance before presenting the findings to a committee.

"We will present our findings including documents and other evidence to the committee," he said.

Mohamad Muda added that it was up to the committee to decide whether it was a heritage building.

It was reported earlier that the bungalow, formerly a mining company's office, was one of the first residential homes to receive electricity in Malaysia and the family had lived there since 1960.

The report also stated that the Sino-Malay-Palladin building and several other houses were originally built in 1920 by Berjantai Tin Dredging Bhd, which had been given the mining lease for the area.

In 1959, the company sold the property to Pologa Nathan, an employee, who subsequently sold it to Maljindar's great-grandmother Gurtha Kaur.



National Heritage Department staff visiting the house to determine its historical importance.

According to Maljindar, the family first applied to alienate the land with the Kuala Kubu Baru Land Office in 1967 but did not receive any reply.

In 1989, through a Deed of Assignment, Gurtha transferred her interests in the property to Maljindar's father, the late Mahindar Singh.

However, the mining lease for the land had already been granted to Associated Pan Malaysia Cement Sdn Bhd (APMC) and Lafarge Malayan Cement Bhd.

In 2007, Mahindar and 14 others filed a suit against APMC and Lafarge after they were asked to vacate the premises.

Last year, the Shah Alam High Court held that the family was only a licensee when they settled on the land, a decision upheld by the Court of Appeal.



A total of 129 Sidhu Brar family members gathered in front of the house in Kuala Garing, Rawang.



Mohamad Muda (right) and Maljindar discussing the history of the bungalow in Rawang.