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NIRVANA

CEMETERY PROJECT UPROAR

Nirvana will
leave issue to
Selangor govt

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A MEMORIAL service company, whose Chinese cemetery project in Puncak Alam here has provoked protests from villagers, will leave the matter to the state government.

Nirvana Malaysia chief operating officer Datuk Freddy Chan said the land near Kampung Felda Bukit Cerakah was bought only after the state government had gazetted it as a burial plot under the Selangor Local Plan 2013.

He said the company had received approval from the local authority to clear the land for the project.

"We saw the opportunity to build a

Chinese cemetery after the land was gazetted as a burial zone in 2013, and bought the 96.6ha to develop it into a graveyard."

He said Nirvana had carried out land clearing after obtaining approval via a letter dated Nov 21 last year.

"When villagers protested against it, we agreed to remove our machineries as, in our business, we want to make everybody happy and not upset anyone," he told the *New Straits Times*.

Chan said the project included a plan for a Muslim cemetery, for which Nirvana had allocated 10 per cent of the land area.

He said the Muslim cemetery would be handled by the state government as Nirvana managed only the burial site for non-Muslims.

"Since it has been approved by the state government, we will continue with the project."

On whether the company would hold a meeting with villagers, Chan said it would leave it to the Kuala Selangor District Council and Land



Villagers protesting against the land clearing to make way for a cemetery in Kuala Selangor, Selangor on Wednesday. PIC BY ROSLIN MAT TAHIR

and District Office.

On Wednesday, some 200 residents from six villages and a residential area in Puncak Alam staged a protest at the project site, which is

in the villages.

The residents were from Kampung Felda Bukit Cerakah, Kampung Bukit Kapar, Kampung Bukit Kapar Tambahan, Bukit Kerayong, Kam-

pung Bukit Hijau, Kampung Jaya and Puncak Alam.

A spokesman for the group, Melan Ismail, 49, said the villagers saw the project, which started last week, as unsuitable as it was for non-Muslims when the majority of residents were Muslims.

He said they planned to collect signatures from residents before sending a memorandum of protest to the state government, and "will do anything it takes" to ensure the project was stopped.

Kuala Selangor member of Parliament Datuk Seri Irmohizam Ibrahim said the state government should have conducted a social impact assessment instead of taking the authoritarian approach.

"The Selangor government had put profit above the sensitivities of the people in Puncak Alam when they approved the project. I have received many complaints from residents who oppose the building of a cemetery in their area. They were not consulted."