

# Understand Kuala Lumpur

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The government is pushing forward the transformation of KL, with major transport and urban regeneration projects.

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As the capital of a 'mega-diversity' country, how green is KL's environmental scorecard?

# Kuala Lumpur Today

The general election of 2013 saw the BN coalition retain control of the country as well as KL, where the city council is centrally appointed. The opposition PK coalition remains in the driver's seat for Selangor. Now it's full speed ahead on major infrastructure developments for the capital, including a new mass rapid transit (MRT) line and the River of Life urban regeneration project.

## Best in Print

**Urban Odysseys** (ed Janet Tay & Eric Forbes) Short stories that capture KL's multifaceted cultural flavour.

**KL Noir** Three volumes of short stories zoning in on the city's sinister and spooky underbelly.

**My Life as a Fake** (Peter Carey) Reworking of Frankenstein evokes the sultry side of KL.

**Found in Malaysia** (The Nut Graph) Compilation of 50 interviews with notable Malaysians from the news and analysis website ([www.thenutgraph.com](http://www.thenutgraph.com)).

**The Consumption of Kuala Lumpur** (Zaidin Sardar) How the once-sleepy capital has evolved into a modern economic marvel.

## Best on Film

**Entrapment** (1999) The climax of this Sean Connery and Catherine Zeta-Jones thriller takes place at KL's Petronas Towers.

**Septet** (2004) Chinese boy falls for Malay girl in Yasmin Ahmad's romantic comedy.

## GE13 & After

In the months leading up to the 5 May 2013 general election (GE13), opposition parties, political commentators and the public had been calling attention to irregularities and unfairness in Malaysia's electoral system. Unbalanced constituency sizes, lack of access to the media for campaigning, and possibility of gerrymandering were the main concerns. Major rallies in KL saw tens if not hundreds of thousands marching for fair and free elections.

Once votes had been cast and counted, BN had lost seven seats in the national parliament but emerged as the majority winner, thus again able to form a government with Najib Razak back as prime minister. The opposition parties in PK won a majority of votes overall, but this counted for little given Malaysia's first past the post election system. PK did, however, hold onto government in Selangor, the state surrounding the federal territory of KL, which it had first captured in the 2008 election.

On 8 May it was reported that 120,000 people, many clad in black, showed up at a stadium just outside the city limits to protest the election results. However a 'Malaysian Spring' was not in the offing. With racially divisive rhetoric in the air (Najib had referred to a 'Chinese tsunami' of voters as being responsible for the coalition's losses) people from all sides called for community harmony and the need to double down on the objectives of the 1Malaysia policy.

## Improving Public Transport

If one thing unites all KLites, it's their frustration with public transport. Squashed into a monorail or train carriage at rush hour, or stuck in a highway traffic jam, it's easy to share their pain. To address the problem the government is upgrading and integrating the