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Village Of No Return

The Straits Times, 25 April 1958, Page 6

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Village Of No Return

For two years now the Selangor and Federation Governments have been talking of the return to life of the once notorious village of Jenderam, evacuated seven years ago under the Emergency Regulations. The authorities appear to have gone through all the motions of preparing Jenderam's rehabilitation. Its former inhabitants, mostly Malays, were assured that everything was being done to hasten their return. Last October the Prime Minister assured a delegation that he would send them back to their homes if the State War Executive Committee raised no objections. The S.W.E.C. had no objections. A few weeks later the Emergency Operations Council decided to allow the villagers to go back. The Selangor Government announced that it was drawing up a plan to resettle them. In fact the rehabilitation of Jenderam was given "top priority". And then the Selangor State Secretary announced that all plans were delayed by "unforeseen technical difficulties." These difficulties appear to be not so much technical as financial. The rehabilitation scheme is expected to cost \$2,000,000. The State Government believes the Federal Government should find the money, presumably because the village was evacuated on its instructions. It is not

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4 June 1958 - MAYOR'S LIGHT PLAN READY: NOW



fair that the villagers should be kept in suspense like this. The Federal and State Governments both have a responsibility towards the uprooted people of Jenderam. They were kept in detention camps for a while, and then released to fend for themselves. Many are staying with relatives and others eke out a living somehow. Is it right that they should be prevented from returning to the homes and land they were forced to abandon seven years ago? Other "bad" villages have been reopened with a fanfare: why not reopen Jenderam with a generous flourish?



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