



**Preventive measures:** The mitigation project includes setting up retaining walls and dredging works along a 2.1km stretch of the Sungai Pelempas where the floods have occurred. — SADIQ SANI/The Star

# Hope for an end to floods

Flood mitigation works have begun in three flood-prone villages in Shah Alam but residents are also seeking short-term solutions to end the flooding issue of over 20 years. >2&3



Many residents have renovated their homes to keep the water out but despite their efforts, water levels exceed the retaining walls and enter their houses. — Photos: SADIQ SANI/The Star

# Receding concerns of flood

Residents of three villages in Shah Alam want clearer picture of mitigation works

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IN THE past 10 years, 61-year-old Zulkepli Sanusi has had to raise his house in Desa Subang Perantau, Shah Alam, on six occasions in an attempt to keep floods out.

However, his efforts were futile and all the money spent was wasted.

His latest effort to raise the front porch of his house was only half-complete as the retiree did not have any money left after using up almost all his savings to replace furniture and belongings that were destroyed in the flash floods.

"I cannot afford it anymore. I have three old cars that are just lying here because they were destroyed in the floods.

"I get by each day doing odd jobs and most of the time, the money goes towards my children's education," said the father of four.

Zulkepli is just one of 30,000 residents of three large neighbourhoods – Desa Subang Perantau 2, Kampung Melayu Subang and Taman Setia Warisan, Shah Alam – which have been battling flash floods for more than 20 years.

These neighbourhoods are home to middle- and lower-income folk who have spent a lot of money replacing damaged goods after each flood.

Resident P. Suresh Kumar said it was a traumatic experience each time it flooded.

"The people here cannot afford to continuously live through the destructive floods.

"Some can only get by after receiving monetary assistance from various organisations.

The residents said all it took was a 20-minute rainfall and access to

## Flood-prone villages in Shah Alam



the main roads including Jalan Merbau, Jalan Resak, Jalan Cengal, Jalan PKNS and Jalan Jati would be blocked off.

Kampung Melayu Subang Masjid An Nur president Mesni Dahlan said access to the village would be completely cut off during the floods.

"Residents returning after work have no access to get to their homes, so they are unable to salvage their belongings," he said.

Houses in Kampung Melayu Subang, he added, had water marks from the floods that had reached as high as 1.3m.

A check by *StarMetro* revealed that most houses still had appliances

and furniture that were damaged by the floods lying around their houses.

Many of them cannot afford new furniture and end up storing the damaged goods outside or continue using them despite the dilapidated condition.

Homeowners have also renovated their houses with hopes of keeping the water out.

Residents had approached Shah Alam City councillor Foong Saik Hoong, several times, to find a solution to the flooding problem. An end to their woes may just be in sight.

Foong said the problem was not caused by the river's capacity alone

as another major contributor was the drainage in the villages.

"The rivers and drains cannot cope with the sudden increase in rainfall these days.

"It is an internal and external problem that has to be dealt with simultaneously for it to be resolved," he added.

Foong said flood mitigation works involved two phases involving the Selangor Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) and the Selangor Public Works Department (JKR).

"The DID project involves setting up retaining walls and dredging works along a 2.1km stretch of the Sungai Pelempas where the floods



DID staff checking the flood sirens at Kampung Melayu Subang.



This flood meter has become a common sight in Kampung Melayu Subang, where flash floods are a frequent occurrence.



**The PWD project is ahead of schedule. The DID project is expected to be completed by October.**

Foong Saik Hoong

have occurred," he said.

On the other side of the riverbank, developers Johawaki had also done some work as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts.

"The PWD project is being conducted at Kampung Melayu Subang and is ahead of schedule.

"The DID project is 24% complete and is expected to be completed by October," added Foong.

While residents are pleased with the work progress, some are hoping for short-term solutions as well.

In Subang Perantau 2, works have yet to begin so residents are at the edge of their seats each time skies get dark.

Worried for their safety, residents believe that raising the roads in the area, which are lower than the river, would be a good temporary solution.

"There is nothing anybody can do to stop the water because we are on lower ground.

"The only way is to increase the road levels by resurfacing them. At least that will hold up until the river project ends," said Subang Perantau 2 residents head

Meor Abdullah.

In Kampung Melayu Subang, where sheet piles are being constructed along the riverbank, residents are looking at cleaning up the river upstream to increase the capacity.

Motorcycle workshop owner Azam Bakar, 47, said they preferred if the cleaning was done upstream and questioned the need of the sheet piles.

He had lost goods worth over several thousand ringgit and even had customers' motorcycles washed away during the floods before he raised the floor level of his workshop.

"We are the best informants for these consultants and engineers.

"They should come and speak to us first before doing anything," he said during a walkabout with Foong recently.

Foong said the construction of the sheet piles was based on a 100-year projection to resolve flooding issues.

He added that he would ask DID to provide a briefing on the entire flood mitigation project to residents to ease their worries.



Zulkepli's son, Ahmad Rahmat Zulkepli, clearing out various items from their home in Desa Subang Perantau after a recent flash flood.



Zulkepli's cars that were destroyed by the floods. They are left to rot in front of his house because he cannot afford to get them fixed.