

# POOR ATTITUDES AND DRAINAGE TO BLAME

**I** REFER to the report "Flash floods after downpour cause massive traffic congestion in Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley" (NST, April 12).

One of the primary causes of flash floods in several parts of Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley today is clogged drains and a poor drainage system.

The drains are clogged with debris and litter, particularly those around construction sites.

The silt traps built at the project sites are very poorly maintained. As a result, sediment and debris end up clogging the drains, leading to flash floods after a downpour. There must be more stringent supervision at construction sites to ensure that the silt traps are functioning.

Poor supervision, a lackadaisical attitude and inadequate budget are the major factors for poor maintenance of drains.

In recent years, flash floods have become common in the Klang Valley.

Road users and pedestrians are the worst affected as traffic will be reduced to a crawl and pathways rendered dangerous.

We should not blame the rain, but instead, look at the root causes of the floods.

As I have pointed out many times, we need to upgrade the drainage system in the Klang Valley. Alam Flora's efforts to clean up drains are insufficient.

There must also be strong commitment from all stakeholders to make Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley flood-free.

Although the Storm Water Management and Road Tunnel (SMART) was built to mitigate floods, it cannot work effectively if the drainage system is clogged.

For years, the media has been highlighting the poor maintenance of the city's drains, which has reduced their flow capacity and caused flash floods.

I was baffled when a former Kuala Lumpur City Hall official recently claimed that some

drains in the city only had the capacity to handle half the amount of water they were built to drain away.

Although some quarters claim that the drainage system in the city is satisfactory, chronic lack of maintenance has made it less efficient to channel rainwater into the rivers.

It was reported that silt, garbage and other obstruction have reduced the carrying capacity of the city's drainage system by up to 50 per cent, and the lack of maintenance will cause more floods in future.

Two former mayors had last year attributed poor drainage and the lack of improvisation in mitigating floods as the main causes of Kuala Lumpur's flash floods. They also said the authorities should set now instead of waiting for floods to recur, and then try to fix the situation.

Based on my observations, the public should take the blame for throwing garbage indiscrimi-



*A poor drainage system is a major cause of flash floods in the Klang Valley.* FILE PIC

nately, which has clogged up the drains.

It is also reported that the main reason for flooding, despite having SMART, is because the three tributaries of Sungai Klang have overflowed their banks.

Therefore, I hope the authorities can expedite the project to build a water catchment area for Sungai Bunus after similar projects were successfully implemented at Sungai Klang and Sungai Gembak.

The water catchment area will prevent floods as excess water can be stored in the reservoir.

We need a network of drains, retention ponds and underground tunnels to effectively drain away the water.

We should not wait for a disaster to happen. There must be a comprehensive plan to tackle the problem.

**TAN SRI LEE LAM THYE**  
Kuala Lumpur