

# Temple in danger of collapse



PRECARIOUS SPOT: The Hindu temple in Old Klang Road, near Kuala Lumpur, is in danger of collapsing following soil erosion after a landslide caused by heavy rains.

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** A Hindu temple is dangerously perched on a riverbank in Jalan Klang Lama, near here, following a landslide caused by heavy showers over the past four weeks.

Devotees of the Shivan Temple have stopped worshipping there while residents of the nearby Pinang Court 1C apartments in Sri Sentosa are worried for their safety.

Federal Territory drainage and irrigation director Chia Chong Wing described the landslide as "critical" but assured residents there that it would not affect their homes.

"If anything would go first, it would be the temple," he said.

"Based on current observations, the landslide has only affected the right portion of the temple and that is because it is next to the Klang river."

Chia, who visited the area on Sunday, added: "My officers will take soil samples for testing to evaluate the stability of the temple.

"The report should be ready in two weeks or so."

As a safety precaution, he advised devotees to temporarily stay away from the area until the department determined the

condition of the temple.

He added that his department would look into building an embankment in the affected area.

"A directive to relocate the temple will only be given if it is absolutely necessary to do so," said Chia.

The landslide, which affected the back portion of the temple, was first noticed two weeks ago. The soil over a 20m stretch has since continued to erode.

A devotee, identifying himself only as Shankar, said some 30 years ago there was only a

shrine at the spot, which was gradually renovated and turned into the temple.

The nearest block of apartments is less than 100m from the temple.

"The water level rises to a critical stage during the monsoon period," added Shankar.

In a related development, Works Minister Datuk S. Samy Vellu has directed the Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) and Projek Lebuhraya Utara Selatan Bhd (PLUS) to carry out surveillance and inspections on all landslide-prone stretches of the North-South Expressway

and Karak Highway.

He gave the directive following the landslide near the Jelapang toll plaza on the NSE, which forced PLUS to temporarily close the emergency and slow lanes on the south-bound route.

The debris was cleared by midnight yesterday and the two lanes were to be re-opened by 7pm yesterday.

The landslide occurred along a slope about 200m from the Menora tunnel at 7.40pm on Monday.

No casualties or damage to vehicles were reported.