

Living in fear

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It's been nearly a year since the big flood in Taman TTDI Jaya, but the residents are still apprehensive each time it rains in Shah Alam. >M2



Making it safe

Work to raise the embankments on either side of Sungai Damansara in Taman TTDI Jaya, Shah Alam, are in progress as part of RM10mil in flood mitigation projects in the area.

- ELAN PERUMAL / THE STAR

Flood memories haunt

Current rainy spell giving them

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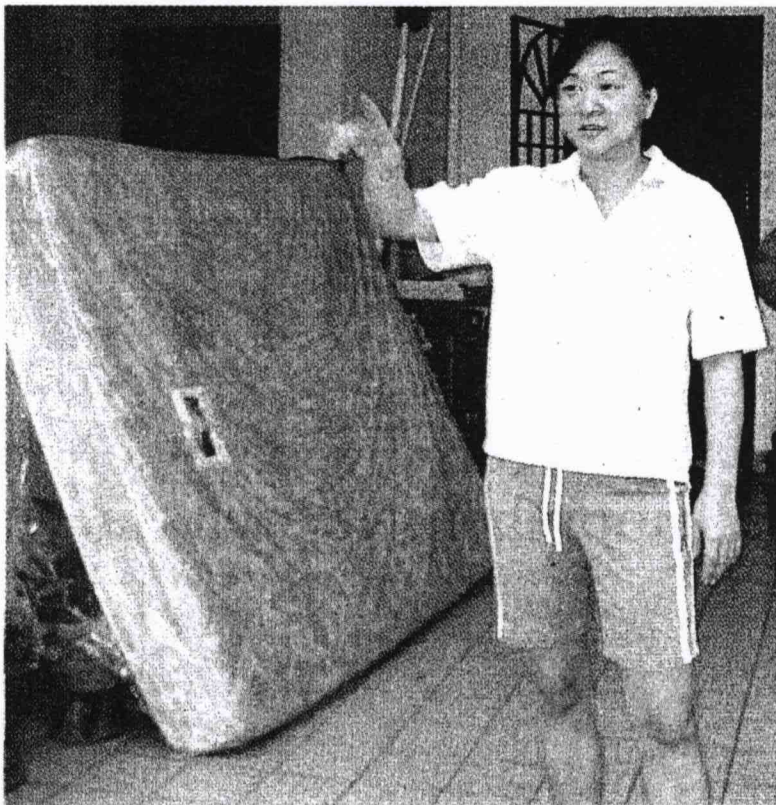
THE bad memories of last year's flood still haunt the 15,000-odd residents of Taman TTDI Jaya in Shah Alam. Ever since that fateful afternoon, there has never been a day when they did not fear a repeat of the Feb 26 flood.

The residents are apprehensive, even when it is only drizzling outside.

The nightmare of having been trapped in their homes for more than 24 hours after the flood waters rose about a metre high is still fresh in their minds. Some were even locked up on the first floor of their homes and had to wait through an entire night before the waters subsided.

For the residents, Taman TTDI Jaya "is the biggest retention pond in the state capital". They feel that their homes are on a lower ground as compared to neighbouring development where the ground level had been raised between five and 10 metres.

The residential area has experienced many more floods even before last year's. Some claim that they have seen over a hundred flash floods before that, but most agree



Unfinished business: Seow says her home is still a mess as a result of last year's floods.

»I don't think the authorities have done enough to prevent a recurrence of the floods.«

CINDY SEOW

that the last one was the most devastating in terms of property losses. Even the prices of their houses have dipped.

The "For Sale" signs have increased in recent months. However, there seem to be no takers.

"We were caught unawares before, and we do not want a repeat of it today," said Cindy Seow, 41, a managing director of a travel agency.

She had only recently spent about RM6,000 to paint her house. "I've



Bitter memories: Ameena suffered losses worth RM1mil when flood waters inundated her stationery shop last year.



In stand-by mode: Amelia prepares for another flood by hanging up dry goods and groceries on the wall.

City Hall braces for possible floods

By BAVANI M.
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THE Federal Territories Ministry and Kuala Lumpur City Hall are all geared up to deal with a possible flood situation in Kuala Lumpur if at all it occurs.

Minister Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique, who was at City Hall's flood operations centre in Jalan Tun Razak on Monday, said the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) was monitoring the flood early warning systems.

"City Hall's disaster aid management committee comprising representatives from various government agencies such as Alam Flora, the Fire and Rescue Department, DID and the Federal Territory Red Crescent Society will be involved in the project.

"Once there is an increase in the water levels at the dams, the public will be warned via a siren-like early warning system at Kg Periuk, Kg Baru, Jalan Tun Razak, Jalan Masjid India and Jalan Dang Wangi and Dataran Merdeka.

"City Hall will also be working with the Integrated Transport Information System (ITIS) to disseminate information on the flood situation at major roads in the city," he said adding that 2,000 personnel would be involved in rescue operations.

"Thirty-eight multi-purpose halls and 42 schools have been identified as flood relief centres in the event of a flood," he said, adding that these halls could easily hold about 13,000 victims.



All prepared: Zulhasnan (right) inspecting emergency equipment which will be deployed by City Hall if the city is hit by floods.

folks in TTDI Jaya

sleepless nights

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»We have to make do with the damaged furniture as I do not want to risk spending money on new ones«

R. ELANGO VAN



High enough: Elangovan showing the level of water that poured into his house during the previous floods.

State Infrastructure committee chairman Datuk Abdul Fatah Iskandar said the Selangor Government and the Drainage and Irrigation Department had spent about RM10mil on flood mitigation projects at Taman TTDI Jaya alone.

“We have created new retention ponds and the embankments on either side of the river have been raised by about a metre,” he said. “And, a new automated pump house is being built while the river is being widened and deepened.”



Flood mitigation effort: One of the newly built retention ponds in Taman TTDI Jaya.

incurred a loss of about RM30,000 in damages to furniture, electrical appliances, clothes, car and other items in last year's tragedy," said Seow. "To this day my home is still messy.

"And, I don't think the authorities have done enough to prevent a recurrence of the floods," she added.

An executive with the Sungai Way Free Trade Zone, Amelia Zakaria, 33, said the residents had been having sleepless nights in recent weeks due to the current rainy spell.

"We have been moving our vehicles to higher ground near a bridge every time it rains," she said, adding that they had done so twice in the last five days already.

"I have started to hang sundry goods such as rice, sugar, salt and food on a wall so that they could be reached should a flood hit us again," she said, adding that her carpets had been rolled up against the walls as a precaution. "I dare not bring them down."

Businessman R. Elangovan, 43, estimated his loss to be over RM300,000. "Two of my cars, including a Mercedes Benz E200, and furniture were damaged in the February floods.

"We have to make do with the damaged furniture as I do not want to risk spending money on new ones," he said, adding that he feared for the safety of his wife and two children each time he went on business trips abroad.

Stationery and computer accessories shop operator Ameena Bi Mohd Yusoff, 33, still sheds tears when she recounts her loss in last year's flood.

"I lost about RM1mil. What is the point of talking about it now? I would have gone crazy if it was not for the backing of my family," she said.

"The worse is not over yet," she said. "The road outside my shop still floods each time it rains."

TTDI Residents Association chairman Abdul Jabar Kasim said he had undergone training to handle pump houses.

"I have the keys to the pump houses so that the residents can have access to the premises should help not arrive on time," he said.