

600 people evacuated

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Earth near four blocks of flats slips 50m

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KUALA LUMPUR: Heavy rains triggered a landslide at the back of a row of low-cost flats in Section 10, Wangsa Maju, forcing about 600 residents to flee their units during breaking fast. No casualties were reported in the 7.10pm landslide that buried four cars and damaged three others, as well as several motorcycles.

The residents had to be evacuated to temporary relief centres, as the earth that slipped 50m down a slope seemed to pose a danger to the blocks.

Part of the road leading to the flats collapsed.

Many of the residents rushed out while others shouted to their neighbours to get out of their flats when they saw chunks of earth sliding down the slope.

Following the landslide the authorities ordered residents in Blocks B3, B4, B5 and B6 to move out of their homes.

Tour agency employee Syed Huzaimi Syed Sagap, 35, said he was visiting his father at Block B5 when he heard rumbling noises.

"I was just outside my father's flat at the ground floor waiting to break fast at about 7pm. Minutes later, I heard some strange noises like something falling. I saw a storehouse sliding down the slope. I shouted at everyone to run out of their houses," he said.

Housewife Norzehan Zainal, 43, who was staying at Block B4, said she was outside her flat at the third floor watching workers building the Duta-Hulu Kelang Expressway (Duke).

"Suddenly, huge chunks of earth fell and I saw the workers running away. I also saw part of the road starting to collapse," she added.

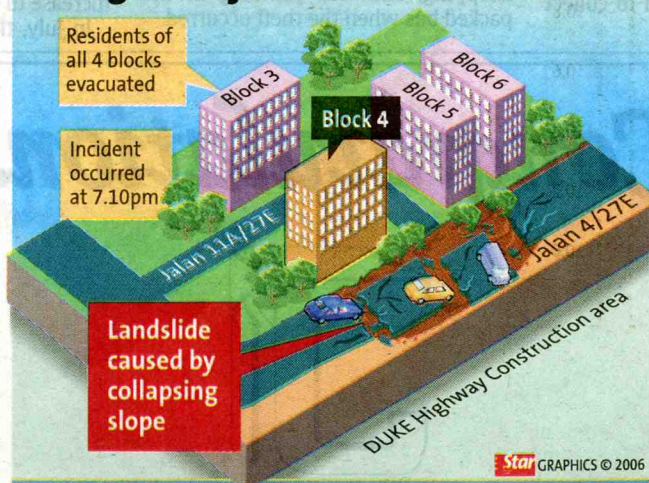
Fire and Rescue Department operations commander Mat Ali Ismail said Hazmat team members were called in after reports of gas leaks.

Federal Territories Minister



DANGER: Residents looking at the earth that slipped at least 50m near their flats in Section 10 Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday evening.

Landslide at Section 10, Wangsa Maju



Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique said that residents from 160 units of house from the affected blocks have been advised to vacate their homes and they would be temporarily housed at several multipurpose halls in and around Wangsa Maju.

He said that seven cars and a few motorcycles were damaged.

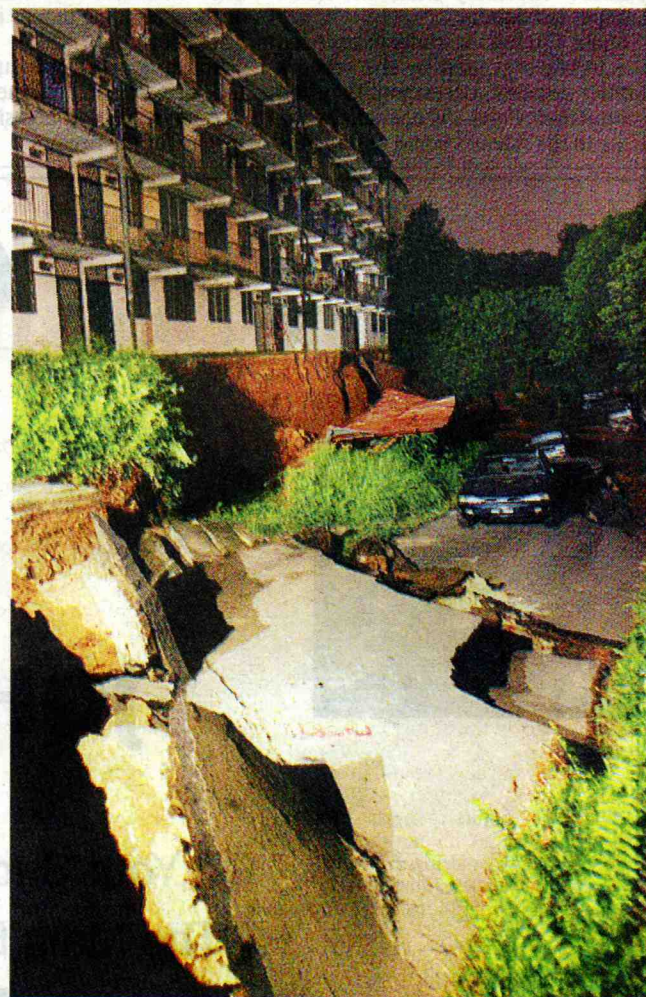
"The residents of the affected blocks have been allowed to collect important documents and belongings. The flats have been cordoned off.

Zulhasnan also said tests

would be carried out on the affected area by officers from the Drainage and Irrigation Department.

"We do not know the cause of the incident, whether it was triggered by underground water seepage or construction of the highway.

According to news reports Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu had ordered the contractor involved in the Duke expressway project to carry out remedial work on the affected area and to submit a report on the incident to the ministry.



CLOSE CALL: Part of the collapsed slope near the Section 10 flats in Wangsa Maju Kuala Lumpur.