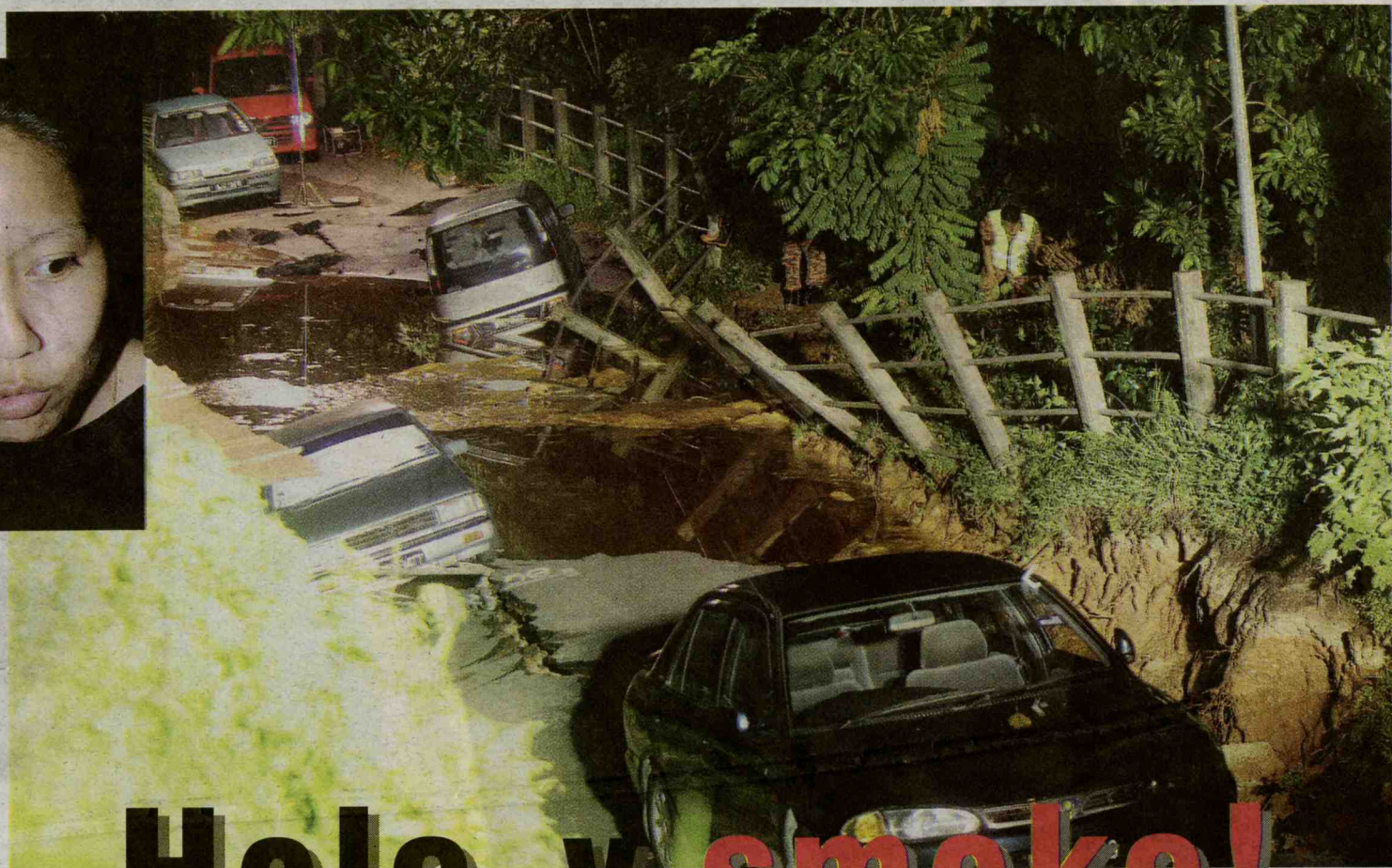




DAMAGED

Cars were tossed around by the landslide. INSET: Hairinawati



Hole-y smoke!

By NAJIAH NAJIB

THE remainder of Ramadan looks to be a bleak one for two families who were forced to flee their homes after part of their low-cost flats in Section 10, Wangsa Maju, collapsed yesterday.

"My family and I were about to break fast when we felt a tremor," said resident Nurul Faidah Sulaiman.

"I heard a knock on the door. When I opened it, I saw one of my neighbours yelling that part of our building had collapsed."

The 22-year-old sales assistant said everything happened so fast.

"I rushed to the corridor just in time to see the left side of my block collapsing. It was chaotic.

"Everyone was running everywhere, the children were crying ... I couldn't even think," she said.

Nurul, whose flat is on the third floor of Block B4, said her only concern was her family. Her relatives had come down from her kampung to *buka puasa*.

She said her father's motorcycle, which was parked behind the block, was buried underneath the earth and debris.

"Our car was parked elsewhere. I'm glad my family is okay, it could have been worse," said Nurul.

For resident Hairinawati Hassin, 25, her only concern was her two-month-old unborn child.

"It was just after the *Azan* and I wanted to wash my hands to break fast when I noticed there wasn't any water from the tap.

"There was also a pungent gas smell. It was then that I felt a tremor."



SHEER DROP

Residents get a closer look at the damage to the area

She said everyone panicked and tried to escape.

Shaken by the incident, the Muslim residents only managed to break fast properly at 10.30pm, courtesy of the local mosque, which prepared food for them.

The landslide, which occurred at 7.10pm, had forced almost 700 residents from four blocks, B3, B4, B6 and B7 to evacuate. Each block has 160 units.

The authorities were at the scene by 7.30pm and cleared the area for evacuation.

Federal Territories Minister Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique, who was at the scene, said the incident occurred near the block of flats.

"There were no injuries or loss of lives.

Six cars and several motorcycles were damaged, though," said Zulhasnan, who is also Wangsa Maju MP.

He said residents were permitted to take turns to salvage their personal belongings.

He said the occupants of the flats will be relocated to multi-purpose halls in Wangsa Maju.

Zulhasnan said the authorities, including officers from the Drainage and Irrigation Department will launch an investigation.

"We do not know the cause yet, whether it is due to the seepage of ground water or the effects of the Duta-Hulu Klang highway construction works nearby.

"I have advised all residents not to enter their homes without the authorities' permission."