

An end to flood woes

By FAZLEENA AZIZ

fazleena@thestar.com.my

Photos by SHAHRUL FAZRY
ISMAIL

RM6.6mil project at Sungai Batu to be completed by year end

A RM6.6mil flood mitigation project approved by the Federal Government will soon take shape along Sungai Batu, near Kampung Kasipillay and Jalan Kolam Air, in Kuala Lumpur.

The project, which is slated to be completed by the end of the year, comes as long overdue news for the residents in the area.

For more than 20 years, the residents have faced some of the worst flooding, with the most recent one occurring on Aug 21.

A retaining wall measuring 100m long will be built on the right bank (near Kampung Kasipillay) and another measuring 600m (near Kolam Air) will stand on the left bank of the river. The height of the existing wall will also be raised by 0.8m.

Federal Territory PPP chief Datuk A. Chandrakumanan said the project was approved after a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin in August.

He said Muhyiddin was keen on resolving the issue as soon as possible. The meeting was held with Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) and Alam Flora Sdn Bhd.

A site visit with the respective departments and agencies was carried out recently to see some of the issues affecting the people and project.

"The residents have been facing floods for too long and this project will help alleviate the situation. We want to make sure all the factors are taken into consideration before this project goes through.

"We had actually held discussions earlier this year to find a solution, and after the most recent flood it was agreed upon that a retaining wall would be built to stop the



Checking it out: Chandrakumanan (front, centre) discussing the plans during the visit.

water from overflowing into the surrounding neighbourhoods," he said after visiting the affected areas.

DBKL engineering department deputy director Hew See Seng said the local authority would be working with DID on this project.

"The river cannot be deepened because it will affect the flow of water downstream. Some clearing of silt will have to be done," he said.

R. Panchatcharam, 73, who has been living in Kolam Air since 1968, said the floods were almost a routine problem for the family.

He said the area had faced flood problems since 1971.

"The last flood happened on my birthday, Aug 21. I was getting ready to go to the temple when the flood water started pouring into my house.

"We sprang into action immediately as we have done countless times before, because the situation is not unusual for us here and the water always rises very fast.

"I believe that on that particular day even the retention ponds were full, so nothing much could be done.

"Now they have said the wall will

be built, so we wait for it and hope this will stop the flooding," he said.

Menara Megah Condominium Residents' Association member Low Lean Yeok, who witnessed the flood on Aug 21, said it was high time that something was done about the matter.

"People's lives are affected by the floods, especially those living in Kolam Air.

"Although I was not a direct victim, I feel for the people living here," she said after showing some of the pictures taken from her condominium during last month's flood.