

Mud flood dampens Christmas

LOSSES: Development works claimed to have caused 100-year-old chapel to suffer damage

MUZLIZA MUSTAFA
SUNGAI BULOH
news@nst.com.my

A MAJOR housing development near Desa Coalfield here has left the congregation of a chapel near here in fear whenever there is a downpour.

The rain would sweep debris and earth from the site down the hill, causing the drain to clog, resulting in a mud flood at the 100-year-old chapel.

St Anthony Chapel's administrator Reverend Edwin Paul said the latest incident occurred on Friday night.

"It was the fourth time and the worst mud flood incident since December began."

He said the mud flood came up to a metre and swept the benches in front of the chapel into the drain, which was already clogged with debris from the development site.

"We do not even know if we will be having a Christmas service on Tuesday morning because who knows when the next mud flood will hit."

+ "Furthermore, it is the rainy season," said Edwin.

The downpour at 9.45pm on Friday lasted 1½ hours and damaged several items, including bibles in the chapel.

As for the damaged benches, Edwin said they would have to fix and reuse them as they could not afford to buy new ones.

"This chapel runs on donation from the congregation, made up of 250 families."

"Most of them are poor as they are former estate workers."



The debris and mud washed down by a downpour near St Anthony Chapel in Desa Coalfield, Sungai Buloh.

He said the housing developer for the project was helpful previously when the chapel was hit by the mud flood.

"The mud flood is not a new thing but it has worsened since last year."

The worst flooding was last Friday," he said.

Edwin added that during the earlier incidents, the developer sent

its workers to help clean up the chapel but the response nowadays was slow.

He said the land on which the chapel stood was owned by the developer, which wanted to relocate it.

"But the new site proposed was a bit far for the congregation and we had to say no at the time."

He also said that earlier this

month, the developer agreed to the chapel's relocation.

"This time, the site proposed is nearer. They will build a new chapel for us, but our concern is what are they going to do about the current situation?"

"Christmas is just around the corner and our congregation only has this chapel to go for service. What will they do if it floods again?"

It was learnt that the mud flood got worse after a bund up the hill, which was 150m from the chapel, broke, causing water to overflow.

Edwin said he had approached the developer and was told that the bund would be fixed.

"It is a temporary measure. More needs to be done."

The developer could not be reached for comments.