

# Residents live in fear of floods

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**D**OWNCAST skies have always brought fear to Taman Suria Jaya residents. Over the years, several small floods have occurred in the housing area lying within a short drive of Phoenix Plaza in Cheras. But the flood on May 10 sent residents into a state of panic.

A large group of them described how a sudden rush of water from the hills nearby engulfed the streets. Within minutes, mud and silt had flowed into houses.

One of the roads hit was Jalan Bunga Melur 4, where a kindergarten is located. Parents waded through knee-deep muddy water to pick up their children on the day.

Recalling the incident, principal L.H. Lian described how parents parked their vehicles at the low-cost flats on a higher level nearby to get to their children.

"A small flood occurred on March 21 but the one on May 10 has everyone worried because a lot of water,

silt and mud flowed freely on to the streets and into shops and houses," she related.

Taman Suria Jaya Islamic Residents Welfare Association president Mohd Noordin Mohd Idrus said the association headquarters opposite the kindergarten was also affected.

Restaurant owner Krishnan Kumar estimated the damage to his fridges, gas tanks, pipes and perishables at RM7,000. He was at his restaurant near the kindergarten when a sudden gush of water flooded the place.

"Water and mud rushed in with tremendous force from the back of the restaurant, catching me and my workers by surprise. I had to close the restaurant for two days to have it cleaned," he said.

During the media visit coordinated by Teratai DAP National Consumer Bureau secretary Khong Chee Seng, traces of mud were clearly seen at the site of the abandoned Kolej Kurniawan next to the kindergarten.

Residents said earthworks from a nearby housing project were responsible. They also said the flooding was worse than usual and only happened after development began.

The fence erected near one of the earth bunds collapsed when the bund broke and residents said the developer should have built diversion drains to direct mudflow from the construction site away from houses.

Residents urged the developer to take stricter precautionary measures to prevent floods from recurring.

They also urged Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj) to take heed of the floods in the area and to carry out regular maintenance of drains.

During the downpour, part of the drain along Jalan Bunga Raya 1 collapsed.

This led to a sudden rush of water into four houses opposite the drain. Senior citizen Ah Moi's house was one of those hit by mud and silt, damaging furniture and other household belongings.

Residents are calling for a round table discussion with the developer and the relevant authorities.

They have also taken another step by listing their demands in a memorandum that will be handed to the MPKj planning department soon.

A total of 210 signatures collected



Khong (right) talking to residents about the sudden flood.



The mud-caked entrance to Kolej Kurniawan.

during the recent signature campaign will also be presented.

"The residents want MPKj officials to conduct a site visit soon and to issue a temporary stop work order to the developer if the necessary precautionary regulations are not adhered to," said Khong.

"MPKj should also ask IWK representatives to be present because residents believe mud and silt may clog the sewage system. They don't want to be slapped with a bill from IWK later for unclogging works," he added.

Residents are also seeking compensation for the damage to their belongings.

MPKj corporate communications director Shariman Mohd Nor told *StarMetro* that a stop work order was issued to Desa Kipcity Sdn Bhd, the developer of Kipark Cheras, in March because the developer did not fulfil certain conditions.

He said a release letter would be issued once the developer had reconstructed earth bunds damaged during rainfall and had taken additional steps to prevent mud flow into the residential area.

According to Desa Kipcity senior project manager Y.K. Lim, the company could not do much after the stop work order was issued. He said they were in the midst of reconstructing the diversion drains when the order came.

He added that the two silt traps built for the project under the requirement set by the council were functioning well while the water retention pond was large enough to contain a high volume of water.

Lim also produced a letter addressed to MPKj stating the drain on Jalan 8/154 leading to



Ah Moi was among those caught unaware by the sudden flood on May 10.

Taman Suria Jaya was badly damaged and clogged. It said overflow from the Taman Bukit Cheras sump also entered the drain and worsened the situation.

He said Desa Kipcity was willing to comply with all regulations and hoped the stop work order would be lifted soon.

