

# Thousands support protecting Sungai Puteh reserve

By **SHALINI RAVINDRAN**

shaliniravindran@thestar.com.my

MORE than 10,000 people have signed a petition objecting to the degazettement of the Sungai Puteh Forest Reserve in Ampang for the Sungai Besi-Ulu Klang Expressway (Suke) project.

The month-long campaign was organised by the Save Green Lungs committee to protest against the decision to degazette 30ha of the forest reserve.

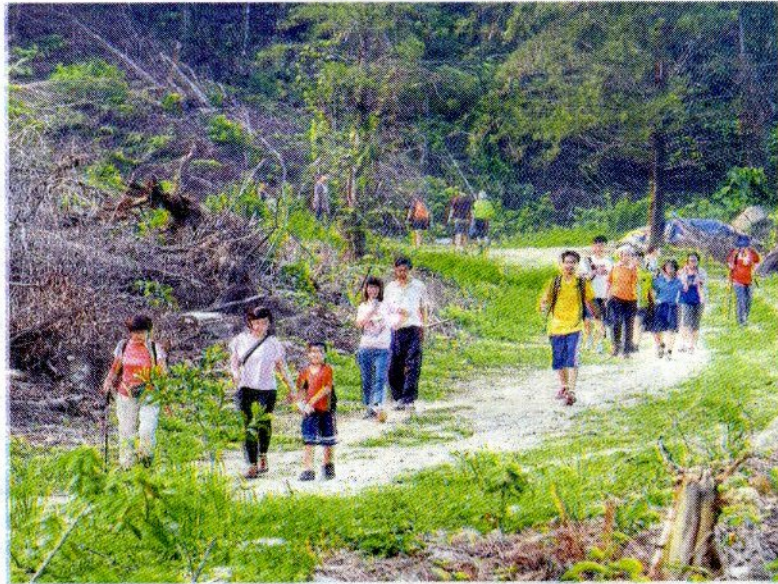
Group chairman Chan Man Yee said the signatures would be sent to the Forestry Department.

"The government has been encouraging the planting of more trees, but what is the point when whole forests are being sacrificed?" he questioned.

Committee member Jessy Phuah said several trees on Saga and Apek hills had red markers.

"We hope that this is not an indication that the trees are going to be cut down.

"The hills of Saga, Apek and Ketumbar are a hiker's paradise with its lush greenery, waterfalls



Hikers starting off their hike up Bukit Saga. Many are objecting to the degazettement of the Sungai Puteh Forest Reserve in Ampang for the Suke project.

and cool winds.

"Hundreds of hikers come here every weekend," she said, adding the forest was an important water catchment area.

"The residents affected by the Suke project were not properly consulted," Phuah said.

Teratai assemblyman Tiew Way Keng said she had brought the

issue up with state Tourism, Consumer Affairs and Environment Committee chairman Elizabeth Wong.

"I was told that the affected area is on the border of the forest reserve, and would not affect the hiking trails.

"Apek hill has already been affected by the high voltage transmission line project by Tenaga Nasional Bhd," she said.

Tiew added Wong had informed her that a hearing would be called once the objection period is over.

Last week, *StarMetro* reported that the Say No To Suke group managed to get the KL High Court to temporarily halt the project's land acquisition, pending a judicial review.

Suke is a 24.4km, three-lane, dual carriageway, elevated expressway which starts from Sri Petaling, passing through Sungai Besi, Alam Damai, Cheras-Kajang, Taman Bukit Permai, Taman Putra, Taman Permai Jaya, Taman Dagang Permai, Taman Kosas, Ampang and Taman Hillview before exiting at Hulu Kelang.