

KERATAN AKHBAR



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THE committee of a 50-year-old Hindu temple near the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport (LITSAAS), which has been affected by flood and soil erosion from a project next door, wants long-term solutions to resolve the problem.

"The temple's drainage and outlets were clogged and completely covered after soil was brought in to raise the land at the project site," said Kuli Sri Maha

Mariamman committee vice-chairman P. Dhandapani, adding that the project belonged to Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB).

"Rainwater would erode the soil and wash it into the temple which is located on lower ground. This would also lead to floods as the drainage system is filled with silt," he said.

The committee estimated that the temple had suffered about RM200,000 in losses from a 1.5m flood that occurred on Jan 30.

"All our furniture, electrical items and prayer items were damaged. The belongings of our three temple priests were also destroyed," said Dhandapani.

According to the committee, the temple located along Jalan Masjid in U3, Shah Alam, was built by airport employees.

Occupying a 111.5 sq m site at the time, the temple served as a place of worship for airport employees and a group of squatters who has since moved out. It still receives some 100 devotees daily. The number of devotees goes up to 350 on special prayer days and to 1,000 when there are religious festivals.

When contacted, a representative from MAHB said: "In developing the area surrounding the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport (LITSAAS) for aviation-related business purposes, Malaysia Airports had put in several measures to mitigate incidents such as flash floods that may cause an impact on the surrounding community.

"These include a permanent retention pond covering 1.8ha near Sungai Damansara, a temporary water catchment area and

Temple wants flood problem resolved

Committee: Project site next door cause of clogged-up drainage



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drainage system covering 0.6ha at the development site itself and a retention sump covering 0.1ha at the temple.

"Unfortunately, during the especially heavy rainfall on Monday (Jan 30) evening, several other factors contributed to the flash flood, including rubbish and natural vegetation blocking the existing drainage system and the installation of a culvert at the wrong level by a nearby concrete batching plant.

"These factors caused the backflow of rainwater into the above-mentioned area. On top of this, two of the three pumps placed at the retention sump were damaged

during the heavy rainfall," he said.

In managing the situation, MAHB said its contractor had immediately deployed new pumps with a larger capacity as well as a team to help clean the affected areas on the same day. These works were fully completed by Feb 1.

"Meanwhile, a meeting with all stakeholders was held on Feb 2 in order to put in place action plans to prevent a recurrence," said the representative.

"Among the immediate action plans identified were clearing all blockages at the existing drainage system, re-leveling said culvert and installing an additional tempo-

rary sump near the temple.

"All construction activities will temporarily cease until the completion of these immediate action plans within the next two weeks. On top of this, workers will also be put on 24-hour standby during this period in case of a recurrence.

"Several possible long-term solutions were also identified, including the construction of a perimeter drain around the temple boundary with a permanent sump pump.

"Malaysia Airports will continue to engage with all vested parties in all our development projects to ensure sustainability of our business and environment," he said.