Narrow escape for some during flash floods

The kitchen was filled with landslide debris, but the tenant, a male, escaped unhurt.

In the Ampang incident, however, the landslide blocked the path of three houses situated opposite a hillside, said a spokesman from the Selangor Fire and Rescue Department.

A tree had also been uprooted in the area while an electric utility pole fell on one of the houses.

R. Nathan, 34, whose house was damaged by the fallen utility pole, said his father and four siblings had managed to escape.

Nathan, who was working when the downpour took place, said his brother's motorcycle was swept away by flood waters.

"It is the second time this year that this area has been flooded," he added.

In Taman Miharja, the Jalan Lombok-Jalan 1/93 road and underpass faced a similar situation where even small lorries had a difficult time passing through.

Residents heading to Kuala Lumpur opted to take the longer route through the Cheras roundabout instead.

G. Athlechumi, a Miharja Flats resident, said there has been frequent case of flash floods in her area.

The most recent was towards the end of 2011, as drainage channels along the underpass had been temporarily blocked while construction was taking place in the area.

"After the construction ended, the Kuala Lumpur City Hall removed the blocks and we did not have any problems until today."

"But today's flooding was really bad," said Athlechumi.

Residents say flood due to clogged drains

By MUHD BASYAR MJSTAPHA
basyar@thestar.com.my

ABOUT 50 houses in Taman Putra, Ampang were flooded after the downpour in Ampang on Wednesday.

The affected residents claimed the clogged drains were the cause of the flood that happened around 2pm.

They also expressed their dissatisfaction with the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) for its failure to clean up the clogged drains.

Resident Tressa Yong, 39, of Jalan 19, said she started panicking and broke into tears when she saw the water level rising in her single-storey terrace house in Taman Putra.

"The water rose to my knees almost drowning some of my furniture," she said.

"I could not see anything in my living room as it happened so fast. I could not even open the front door due to the water pressure outside caused by the flood," said Yong.

Another resident, Wui Fua Kiong, 62 said it was the worst flood to have happened in the area for years.

"We have had floods before, but it was never this bad. The last time this place got flooded was three years ago," he said.

Wui added that he had even built a retaining wall to prevent water from the drain to flow in.

However, the drain could not cope with the rising water level and his house was flooded within minutes.

As for Yunos Sariffin, 60, he said the water in the house was as high as 0.6m after just 10 minutes of rain.

Yunos also blamed the clogged drain for the flood.

"Apart from damage to property, we also have to bear with cost of cleaning up this mess," he said.

Yunos added that he quickly rented a water pump to pump out the floodwater before things got worse.

Selangor Civil Defence chief operating officer, Liew said the residents were devastated and wanted MPAJ to respond to the situation as soon as possible.

"MPAJ should conduct frequent check-up and clean up the drains in this area."

Now the residents have suffered loss to their property in thousands and you can't even imagine the emotional trauma they're going through," he said.

"The local council should take responsibility and lessen the burden of these residents," he said.

Liew added that a few landslides had also occurred in Ampang and Cheras due to the heavy rain on Wednesday.

The areas where the landslide happened were Taman Bukit Permai, "Salak South and Cheras Bank," he said.

"MPAJ should have taken preventive measures to avoid landslides from happening especially in areas with high population.

"In Taman Bukit Permai, for example, the landslide occurred just a few metres away from an apartment and had damaged a car," he said.

Liew added that they should have built a barrier or strengthened the embankment.

Gene: Yong's furniture and electrical appliances were damaged in the flood.