

By **BAVANI M**  
bavanim@thestar.com.my

# River park project in KL vandalised a third time

VANDALS have targeted a river clean-up site around Mid Valley City in Kuala Lumpur for a third time in the past two months.

This comes about a week after *StarMetro's* article on non-governmental organisation (NGO) Friends of Sungai Klang Mid Valley River Three (FoSK TMR3) carrying out river clean-up activities near there.

This time around, the culprits targeted the volunteers' bee pollination project.

FoSK TMR3 co-founder Syuen Toh said plastic wires put up for a pollinator project to attract bees were stolen.

"We completed building vertical coral vines for a bee corridor, but when we came in earlier in the week, the entire thing was gone," Toh said.

"Also, vandalism around the work site has continued as we have noticed items are missing and the gaping hole in our signboards is getting bigger."

Toh added that they were carrying out environmental projects using funds provided by Global Environmental Centre (GEC).

"But we cannot keep going only to see it stolen or destroyed every time," she said.

Following the latest act of vandalism, three officers from Kuala Lumpur Drainage and Irrigation Department paid a visit to the site on Wednesday.

After inspecting the damage and taking note of Toh's complaints on river pollution and encroachment, the officers promised to bring the matter up with Kuala Lumpur City

4 News

## NGO decries targeted vandalism

Signboards damaged, plants destroyed at Sungai Klang riverbank near KL mall

By **BAVANI M**  
bavanim@thestar.com.my

A NON-governmental organisation says unknown culprits are destroying its good work in cleaning up a stretch of Sungai Klang near Mid Valley Megamall, Kuala Lumpur. Friends of Sungai Klang Mid Valley River Three (FoSK TMR3) co-founder Syuen Toh said plastic waste fished out of the river and collected for recycling was burnt. Metal and other materials kept at the riverside nursery were also destroyed in the fire.

This was the second arson incident here. The first occurred in December.

The vandals also cut the mesh wire placed along the sides of a pedestrian bridge to stop rubbish from entering the garden below.

"Among the things thrown below included shopping carts.

"Our pollinating flower plants planned to attract bees and butterflies were also destroyed, and the signage removed," she said.

Also defaced was the River of Life public outreach programme signboard at the site.

FoSK TMR3 is an award-winning NGO that was co-founded by Toh and Kennedy Michael to transform Sungai Klang into a "river park".

"Three or two ago, we caught individuals polluting the river."

"We caught a food trader throwing rubbish into the river on camera and we posted it on social media."

"We also took pictures of a taxi driver throwing rubbish into the river from the bridge."

"We have spoken to the culprits



A signboard near Mid Valley Megamall, Kuala Lumpur that has been defaced. — Photos: YAP CHEE HONG/The Star



Toh removing a shopping cart thrown from the pedestrian bridge.

and advised them not to throw rubbish into the river," she said.

Toh added that people were also using a mini staircase connected to the bridge to get to the riverbank area.

Owners of Abdullah Hukum apartments nearby have been pasting room-for-rent advertisements on the bridge, defacing the area

with stickers.

"I have asked Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) to extend the barrier gate for the upper part of the existing entrance to the bridge to deny access to these vandals," said Toh.

The gate is located on the side of the bridge and was built for volunteers involved in the river clean-up.

"We hope the authorities can help seal the area so intruders can't enter," she added.

When contacted, DID deputy director Ratuja Rajah Sivapiragasam asked the NGO to put a request for a barrier in writing and promised to raise the matter with DBKL.

involved in the river clean-up.

"We hope the authorities can help seal the area so intruders can't enter," she added.

StarMetro's article on Feb 1.

Hall (DBKL) find ways to stop further encroachment by building a fence to keep intruders out.

*StarMetro* had previously reported that vandals burnt the plastic waste and metal items FoSK TMR3 had fished out of Sungai Klang for recycling last month.

This was the second arson incident, as the first occurred in December.

Vandals also cut the mesh wires along the sides of a pedestrian bridge and defaced a River of Life public outreach programme signboard.

FoSK TMR3 is an award-winning NGO co-founded by Toh and Kennedy Michael to transform Sungai Klang into a river park.

Since it started three years ago,

volunteers have pulled out 4,000kg of rubbish from the river.

Meanwhile, GEC river care programme manager Dr K. Kalithasan said unlike other public outreach programmes which saw active participation from the surrounding community, the Mid Valley stretch of the river was more challenging.

"This is because the volunteers are members of the public and not the community from the area.

"We are not seeing residents living and working around the Abdullah Hukum apartment and Mid Valley City stakeholders taking ownership of the river.

"We believe that if the community there takes ownership of the riverbank area, the vandalism and pollution will stop," he said.