

Residents want govt to come clean about housing project

FOR over 30 years, land surrounding the Bohol flood retention pond in Seputeh, Kuala Lumpur, has been a source of controversy for residents in the area.

It all began with a proposal from Kuala Lumpur City Hall in the 1990s to convert it into a dumpsite.

Then in the early 2000s, there was a plan to build an incinerator at the site, dubbed the South Kuala Lumpur Transfer Station, intended to manage waste from the southern part of the city before transporting it to the Bukit Tagar landfill.

"We protested and halted both projects.

"Since then, we've kept a close eye on any developments here to avoid being caught off-guard again," said Kinrara resident HJ Lim, 72.

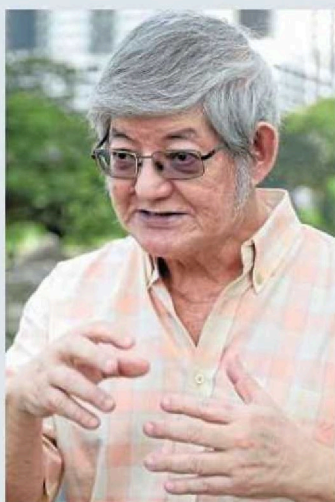
However, Lim's peace of mind was disrupted when residents learned about a government tender published on the Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur Lands and Mines Office (PTGWP) website inviting developers to submit bids on the land next to the pond.

"This time, they simply posted the information on their website, thinking they had fulfilled their due diligence," said another Kuala Lumpur resident, Chin Choong Meng, 76.

Despite being designated as a flood retention pond in Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2040, residents were surprised to find a proposal in the draft Kuala Lumpur Local Plan 2040 suggesting the conversion of Bohol pond land into a residential, community and recreational zone.

Chin noted that satellite photos taken over the past two decades revealed a decrease in the pond's size, with no maintenance conducted for years.

Discharge from Sungai Kuyoh tributaries and various monsoon drains have been flowing into the pond, exacerbating the situation.



Chin says the pond has decreased in size in the last two decades.

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Consequently, residents in low-lying areas around the pond, including Taman Puchong Indah, Taman Kinrara 1 and 2, and Taman Puchong Batu 7 1/2, have been grappling with severe flooding after downpours.

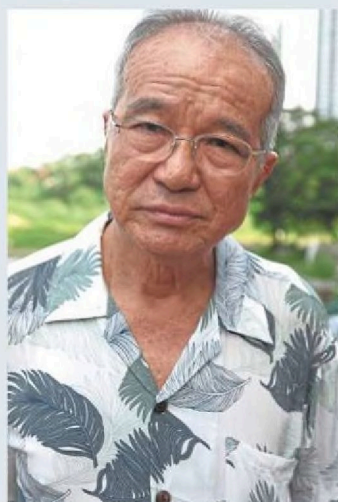
Moreover, Bohol pond plays a crucial role in preventing Sungai Klang from overflowing during heavy rain.

Floods on Dec 18, 2021 and March 7, 2022, caused the pond to overflow, inundating nearby areas such as Shah Alam Expressway (Kesas) and Kinrara Court, after Sungai Kuyoh breached its banks following heavy rainfall.

Reflecting on a flood mitigation project carried out in 2022 by Selangor DID to raise the bund at Sungai Kuyoh, Kinrara Court resident Karen Khor, 69, acknowledged that it had given some relief from flooding.

However, she reiterated the importance of maintaining Bohol retention pond which also requires regular upgrades.

"Some of us at Kinrara Court are still recovering from the last flood.



Lim says Bohol pond land has been earmarked for various developments over the years.

"We've suffered significant losses and want to prevent a recurrence of this disaster," Khor added.

Save Kuala Lumpur chairman Datuk M. Ali, when contacted, questioned whether Kuala Lumpur MPs, who had previously voiced concerns about the sale of flood retention pond land, were aware of this new development.

These MPs had urged the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the police to investigate potential abuse of power after six retention ponds in the city were approved for development following the floods on Dec 18, 2021.

Referring to the Auditor-General's Report 2019 Series 2, which identified six retention ponds – Batu, Nanyang, Delima, Taman Wahyu, Batu 4½ and Taman Desa – as approved for transfer of ownership by PTGWP to four companies for residential and mixed development, the MPs called for an investigation into all parties involved in the transfer of ownership. — **By BAVANI M**



Khor and fellow resident Chia Poh Yin, 66, showing how high floodwaters rose at a property in Seputeh. — YAP CHEE HONG/The Star