Headline	Horror floods still on residents minds		
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Horror floods still on residents' minds

By Loghun Kumaran
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IPOH — Residents of Cameron Highlands are concerned about the risk of severe flooding if nothing is done to check indiscriminate dumping and wanton land clearing.

Despite several government operations and crackdowns, they fear the floods and landslides in 2013 and 2014 could happen again during extreme weather conditions.

Cameron Highlands Parti Sosialis Malaysia secretary Suresh Kumar said the residents had cause for concern as long as the activities were allowed to continue.

"It is unlikely we will see floods in Bertam Valley as the river has been significantly widened. However, places like Ringlet, Kampung Raja and Kuala Terla are still vulnerable," he told *Malay Mail*.

"As long as the land clearing and dumping continue, the risk will always be there.

"Widening rivers is merely to tackle the symptoms of the disease. The real problem remains unresolved."

Yesterday, *Malay Mail* reported the highlands faced more flooding because of a build-up of sedimentation and rubbish in the rivers and Sultan Abu Bakar dam.

The build-up reduces the water-carrying capacity of the rivers and the dam and increases the risk of floods during the year-end rainy season.

During heavy rain, muddy brown sediments and garbage make their way into the rivers.

Cameron Highlands Farming Operators Association chairman Ng Tien Khuan said the risk of flooding would continue until the rampant land clearing stopped.

He said a solution would be to replant trees along the bald slopes of cleared land that dot the highlands' landscape.

"Millions are being spent to dredge the sediments and trash in the dam. It would be better if a portion of that money was spent to replant trees along the hill slopes. We could also build more collection points and recycling centres," he said.

Wholesale vegetable seller Cheng Nam Heong hoped the weather would continue to be good.

"Over the past two years, we haven't seen the type of rain like the deluge that lashed the highlands in 2013 and 2014. But we can see the siltation and the dumping are still clogging the dam," he said.

"All we can do is hope disasters don't return."

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Water collects on a hill slope after heavy rain. Residents are worried that wanton land clearing and indiscriminate dumping of rubbish will continue to put the highlands at risk of flooding. — Picture by Marcus Pheong

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