

Elderly squatters appeal for help

Two temples and a dozen residents get eviction notices to vacate for SUKE project

By **GAN PEI LING**
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

AMPANG: A dozen squatters and two Taoist temples up a hill near Taman Bukit Teratai here, who are to be evicted soon after Chinese New Year to make way for the construction of the Sungai Besi-Ulu Klang Expressway (Suke), are appealing for help.

Wong Chee Keong, 50, chairman of one of the temples, said most of those affected are in their 60s and 70s.

"They are living alone or have become estranged from their families, and are poor," he said yesterday.

Among them is Wong Kwee Kiong, 69, who lives by himself in a makeshift hut.

He used to earn about RM600 a month from planting durian trees on the hill but most of the trees were razed during land-clearing work for the highway that began two weeks ago.

Kwee Kiong, who has cataracts, now needs both a new home and a new source of income.

Wong and the other Taoist temple's owner, Kan Chew Ming, 65, hoped the authorities would also find new homes for the two temples.

"I don't know where to move this temple to," said Kan, who is also a medium.

Three eviction notices have been issued to the squatters over the past

They are living alone or have become estranged from their families, and are poor.

Wong Chee Keong

two weeks, with the last one dated Jan 16, ordering them to vacate by Jan 29.

However, Teratai assemblyman Tiew Way Keng said the Hulu Langat Land Office had agreed to an extension until Feb 28.

"I just called Datuk DO (district officer) from Hulu Langat Land Office. He said we can tell residents to have a peaceful CNY celebration," she wrote in a text message when contacted yesterday.

She added that the district officer would need further discussion on the relocation of the temples.

Meanwhile, a resident of Taman Bukit Teratai, Chow Lin Hua, 50, reported seeing monkeys on the balcony of her house twice this month.

"This has never happened before," she said, adding that the animals scattered her clothing all over the place.

Pandan MCA division chief Datuk Leong Kok Wee said residents there



Leaving home: Kwee Kiong and his makeshift house at the back. (Inset) Chee Keong says most of the squatters are elderly and poor.

and four neighbouring areas are worried about the impact of the ongoing land-clearing work.

"The developer must make sure proper measures are taken to prevent landslides and flash floods," he said.

Suke is a 31.8km three-lane high-

way that will start at Sri Petaling and pass through Sungai Besi, Alam Damai, Cheras, Kajang and several residential areas here before ending in Ulu Kelang.

Project developer Projek Lintasan Kota Holdings Sdn Bhd (Prolintas)

received approval from the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council to start work in September last year.

Residents have objected to the de-gazettement of almost 30ha of the Sungai Puteh Forest Reserve here for the project.