

# Untouchable stream in Bukit Gasing

■ By Noel Achariam  
streets@nstp.com.my

**PETALING JAYA:** In just one year, the once-pristine stream at the Bukit Gasing Education Forest has gone from “safe for consumption” to “untouchable”.

The stream is believed to be polluted by drains from the nearby housing area which flow into it.

Residents, hikers and non-governmental organisations, who are fighting to preserve the only green lung in the area, are upset over the latest development.

Global Environment Centre river care coordinator Dr. K. Kalithasan said the stream’s water quality had deteriorated in the last year.

“When I visited the forest last year, the water quality in the stream was Grade 1, which means that the water is safe to be consumed. But now, the water quality is at Grade 3.

“This means that the water needs extensive treatment and one should not come into contact with it,” he said.

Kalithasan was at the site yesterday at the invitation of the United Coalition of Residents (UCOR) to check on the water quality.

He said there were plans to turn the stream into an education centre. “I used to bring children here to show them



The entrance to the Bukit Gasing Education Forest.

the stream. This was before it was polluted. I tested the water and found that there were dragonfly babies here, which was a good indicator that the stream was clean.

“But now, I don’t find any sign of activity,” he said.

Kalithasan hoped that the Petaling Jaya City Council would seriously look into the state of the forest.

“This is the only remaining green lung in Petaling Jaya and I hope that the local council can work together with the residents to rehabilitate the forest.”

UCOR spokesperson and president of the Association of

Backpackers Malaysia (ABM), Datuk Wong Sai Hou, said that over the years, the Bukit Gasing forest had lost its lustre due to the lack of maintenance.

“I have been hiking in the forest since 1967. Over the years I have seen a lot of changes take place, but now it looks like the forest has been neglected. The trails have been shifted and the stream has been polluted. This has definitely changed the outlook of the place,” he said.

Wong said the residents were concerned over the deteriorating state of the forest.

Their fear that not only the



Datuk Wong Sai Hou (right) together with Ho Wah Ying, showing the eroded state of the trails.

stream but the walking trails too would be destroyed if nothing is done soon.

Wong said that the forest entrance has also been changed drastically and the main walkway was marred by open drains cutting across the trail.

“I don’t understand why there are drains in the middle of the trail. The drains are of no use and the city council should look into covering them up,” he said.

Wong also pointed out that

bricks laid by volunteers along the trail had turned into a hazard for hikers as the bricks had become loose.

“The people who laid the bricks did not do a good job.

“There is no compaction and the water run-off from the hill had loosened the bricks, resulting in erosion of the trails. The city council should be monitoring the forest so that there will not be anymore paved walkway,” he said.

Wong hoped to have a meet-

ing with Petaling Jaya councillor Derek Fernandez and Bukit Gasing assemblyman Edward Lee to discuss the issue.

“We will be discussing the trails and how we can rehabilitate the forest. I also hope that the city council will look into the issues that we have raised,” he said.

Wong added that the UCOR and other non-governmental agencies will be organising a gotong-royong to clean up the forest soon.