

# 'CAMPSITES OPERATING ILLEGALLY'

The three sites were granted permission for organic farming in 2019, says Nga

## BATANG KALI

**T**HE three camping grounds hit by a landslide in Jalan Batang Kali here had been operating illegally since 2020.

Local Government Development Minister Nga Kor Ming said the campsites were granted planning permission for only organic farming, approved by the Hulu Selangor Municipal Council in 2019.

He said as such, the campsite operators had breached provisions under the Street, Drainage and Buildings Act 1974, which provides for a punishment of three years' jail or a maximum fine of RM50,000.

“The government will take stern action (against the operators). No one is above the law.

“This is not limited to just this operator alone, but nationwide.

“Local councils can issue compounding, while the Attorney-General's Chambers can pursue



Local Government Development Minister Nga Kor Ming visiting the site of the landslide in Batang Kali, Hulu Selangor, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

prosecution in court.

“They (illegal operators) are urged to stop their operations and apply for licences quickly before action is taken,” he said at a press conference here yesterday.

Nga said he has instructed for all campsites located near rivers and high-risk areas to be closed for a week, effective immediately.

The directive, he later said, will

remain until further notice.

He said this directive was issued to 155 local councils yesterday morning, following weather forecasts of five days of heavy rain beginning today.

## IN MALAYSIA

**June 30, 1995:** Twenty people were killed in a landslide at the Genting Highlands slip road near the Karak Expressway

**May 31, 2006:** Four people were killed in a landslide that struck Kampung Pasir in Ulu Klang, Selangor

**Dec 26, 2007:** Two villagers were buried alive in a landslide that destroyed nine wooden houses in Kampung Baru Cina, Kapit, Sarawak.

**Dec 6, 2008:** A landslide in Bukit Antarabangsa severely damaged 14 upscale bungalows, killing four and injuring 15

**Feb 12, 2009:** One worker was killed in a landslide at a construction site for a 43-storey condominium in Bukit Ceylon, Kuala Lumpur

**May 21, 2011:** Sixteen people, 15 children and one caretaker of the Hidayah Madrasah At-Taqwa orphanage were killed in a landslide caused by heavy rain at Felcra Semunggis, Hulu Langat, Selangor

**June 5, 2015:** A 6.0-magnitude earthquake in Sabah triggered major landslides at Gunung Kinabalu, killing 18, injuring 11 and leaving many stranded on the mountain

## 'Landslide happened due to slope failure'

**BATANG KALI:** The landslide in Batang Kali happened due to a slope failure, Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad said.

"Based on the data that we have, there was a slope failure with dimensions of 500m in length, 200m in width and 8m in depth.

"The volume (of displaced earth) is 450,000 cubic metres," he said in a press conference at the location.

Nik Nazmi said the ministry expressed its condolences to all families affected by the incident.

He also advised the public to be mindful when they go to risky areas during the rainy season.

"We are praying that all the victims will be found soon," Nik Nazmi added.

# SAM calls for commission of inquiry

**GEORGE TOWN:** Sahabat Alam-Malaysia (SAM) has expressed shock over the landslide tragedy in Batang Kali, and called for a commission of inquiry to be established.

SAM president Meenakshi Raman said the organisation had, time and again, sounded the alarm over allowing earthworks and other activities on highlands and hillslopes, which are environmentally sensitive areas.

She said the root cause of the tragedy must be investigated and publicly disclosed.

"How was a campsite allowed in a hilly area? Photographs showed that a major slope failure had occurred under the highway nearby in the upper reaches of the site. What triggered that?"

"There should be a moratorium in place on all further hillslope developments until there is a thorough review of how vulnerable or resilient these areas are to increased intensity and frequency of rainfalls due to climate change.



*Sahabat Alam Malaysia president Meenakshi Raman says the root cause of the Batang Kali landslide must be publicly disclosed.* FILE PIC

"We are working in uncharted and unprecedented times, where climate change impacts are only now unfolding," she said.

Meenakshi said Malaysia could not continue with business-as-usual approaches.

She said the government must expedite the National Adaptation Plan to understand the high-risk areas that are vulnerable to cli-

mate impacts and take urgent measures to build climate resilience.

"Those responsible for the deaths of victims in the Batang Kali tragedy must be brought to justice.

"A commission of inquiry must be set up to get to the root cause and to find preventive and remedial measures."

**March 23, 2020:** A landslide at Gunung Jerai near Gurun, Kedah, triggered by illegal excavation, killed two people

**Nov 10, 2020:** Two people were killed in a landslide at the Banjaran Hotsprings Retreat in Tambun, Ipoh, Perak

**Dec 2, 2021:** A lorry and an MPV were buried under a landslide at the Simpang Pulai-Blue Valley road near Cameron Highlands. Two people — Muhammad Hafiz Hamdi, 31, and Tan Chee Heng, 36, from Klahg, Selangor — were killed

**March 10, 2022:** Four people were killed when a landslide hit Jalan Teratai 1/2J, Taman Bukit Teratai near Ampang, Selangor

