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**Media Statement**

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**Rapid Development Contributes to Flash Floods In Bayan Baru**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) urges the Penang government to investigate and take immediate action to resolve the problem of flash floods that frequently occurs in Bayan Baru during the rainy season.

Flash floods occurred again today causing thousands of residents and road users in this township to panic due to overflow of muddy water which flooded the area.

SAM's survey found that rapid development here and the failure of the drainage system to function effectively during heavy rain had caused flash floods.

Hill clearing and development on hill slopes in Sungai Ara is likely to be one of the causes of flash floods and mudslides which occurred in Bayan Baru, which is located downstream.

Furthermore, uncontrolled development including on hill slopes in Bayan Lepas also contribute to the floods here.

The situation is made worse because the drainage system built in low-lying areas is inefficient and cannot accommodate the flow of excess water when it rains.

SAM hopes that the Penang government and the City Council of Penang Island (MBPP) will act immediately to stop all development projects which are under implementation in this area to enable relevant departments and agencies such as the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) to conduct a carrying capacity study and find out the cause of the flash floods.

At the same time law enforcement should also be carried out by MBPP on developers, traders and people who litter and cause the blockage of the drainage system in the area to the detriment of the water flow and trigger flash floods in the area.

SAM is concerned that the floods in Bayan Baru will worsen in the future if the source of the problem is not curtailed. In addition to this, the frequency and intensity of rainfall is expected to increase due to climate change. Any future plans for development and drainage systems should take into account the impacts of climate change and be climate resilient.

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