

**PKR man held as City Hall demolishes temple**  
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**BY MUZLIZA MUSTAFA**

Police detained PKR's S.Jayathas when he tried to stop Kuala Lumpur City Hall officers from demolishing the 101-year old Sri Muneswarar Kaliyaman Hindu temple in Jalan P. Ramlee in the capital city early this morning.

The PKR deputy human rights chief was taken to Dang Wangi district police headquarters for obstructing civil servants from carrying out their duty under Section 186 of the Penal Code

Lawyer Latheefa Koya said Jayathas, PKR vice-president N.Surendran and Kota Alam Shah assemblyman M. Manoharan went to the temple around 8am after receiving a message from the temple committee about the City Hall presence there.

"They came and started to remove the deities and wanted to demolish the temple without any warning," said Latheefa.

Surendran, who is also the temple's lawyer, said more than 100 City Hall officers came this morning to demolish the temple.

"They brought over all the machines including the bulldozers ready to destroy the temple. They also brought a group of thugs to scare off the devotees who came to perform special prayers for National Day," he said.

The action taken by City Hall came a day after Malaysia celebrated its 56th National Day.

Surendran said City Hall's action was not valid as they do not have a court order to destroy the temple or deities.

"All I ask for them is to come and negotiate with the temple but right until now no one has come," he said, adding the situation came under control after the police ordered the contractors and City Hall officers to vacate the temple.

"The police came at 10.30am and told them to stop the work and leave the temple. So they obliged. But they are still out there so we do not know what is going to happen next," said Surendran.

He said he would lodge a police report later over an assault carried out by thugs who were at the temple together with the City Hall.

Surendran surrounded by City Hall officers and a Surendran surrounded by City Hall officers and a "I was ganged up by three or four of them and was pushed around. Not just me but the others who tried to stop the demolition work. They were very aggressive," said Surendran.

The structure of the century-old temple, which was built in 1911, now sits on reserve land meant for roads or walkways.

Last year, the temple committee received an eviction notice after Hap Seng Land, which is

constructing a 30-storey office building on the adjacent land, was told that it would only be given a Certificate of Fitness if it built an 8-feet(2.4m) walkway along the building according to City Hall requirements.

But that could not be done as the temple sits on the land on which the walkway needed to be built.

Despite the intervention by local government, the temple committee and the developer failed to come to any agreement.

The developer previously offered to relocate the temple to a land in Sepang but it was rejected as the temple has a historical value and has been there for more than a century.

After numerous failed attempts in reaching an agreement, the developer took City Hall to court.

The court served an injunction to the temple and City Hall served it an eviction notice.

The temple has about 300 devotees and houses two main deities Muneswarar and Kaliamman, hence the temple's name. - September 1, 2013.

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