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# Alone in the dark

## Evening hike at Bukit Jambul goes awry for duo

By **ZALINAH NOORDIN**  
mmnews@mmail.com.my

TWO friends who went hiking for the first time and lost their way at Bukit Jambul on Monday have sworn off the outdoor activity for the rest of their lives.

The duo, Ong Moh Tieh and Teoh Soo Chien, both 24, were stranded for two hours in the dark before being rescued by a 50-member search-and-rescue party comprising the Fire and Rescue Department, police, St John Ambulance and voluntary bodies including Bukit Jambul Hiking Club (BJHC) members.

Recalling the incident, Ong said they decided to go hiking at 6pm, as part of their regime to stay fit and healthy.

"We reached the summit about an hour later and halfway down the hill, everything suddenly got darker but we had no choice but to continue our journey

down.

"As there were two tracks known to us, we decided to take the left one. Soon, we could hardly make out the steps and I suddenly lost my footing and fell," said Ong, a Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) graduate.

Ong said she then panicked when she was unable to locate Teoh's whereabouts.

"It suddenly hit me that we were both in deep trouble and I was praying hard that some hikers would spot and rescue us. Luckily, I was able to contact my mother who in turn alerted the authorities," she said.

"I have never felt so scared in my life and will not go hiking anymore," she said.

Ong said she was lucky to have escaped with only a sprained ankle and minor bruises. She said Teoh had to be hospitalised after sustaining serious injuries. She was believed to have broken

her rib and sustained other internal injuries.

Ong's mother, Tan Ngee Hoi, 47, said her daughter did not inform her that they were going hiking.

"I wouldn't have allowed them if I had known. Thank God she was carrying a mobile phone," she said.

Tan said she would not allow Ong to go hiking again after the incident.

In the meantime, Teoh's relative said her niece was still undergoing various medical tests such as X-rays and ultrasounds but was in stable condition.

BJHC president Heng Yak Hoi said they learnt of the mishap about 8pm after receiving a call from one of the members.

He said it was not the first time hikers had become lost there and advised the public to go hiking early to avoid untoward incidents.



RESCUED AT LAST: One of the stricken hikers being carried down the hill by rescue workers