

Climate havoc

M'sians urged to brace for the worst in face of changes in weather pattern

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PETALING JAYA: The changing weather pattern is disrupting the daily routine of Malaysians as heavy rains lashed most of Klang Valley and other parts of the country yet again.

Malaysians have been advised to brace for the worst, as flash floods could occur even in areas not usually known to be flood-prone, said Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Douglas Uggah Embas.

Attributing the unpredictable weather to global climate change, he

said the public should be prepared for any eventualities, citing how Kajang, Selangor, was unexpectedly hit by floods on Friday.

Yesterday evening, almost 100 trees were uprooted in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor as strong winds ravaged the city.

► **TURN TO PAGE 2**



Nature's fury

Vehicles negotiating floodwaters over a stretch of the Damansara-Puchong Highway in Puchong yesterday. (Inset) It was bumper-to-bumper traffic along Jalan Tun Razak in Kuala Lumpur when the freak thunderstorm and strong winds tore through the capital and parts of Selangor, causing flash floods, uprooting trees and damaging property.



D-G: Heavy rains and storms due to the La Nina phenomenon

> FROM PAGE ONE

The rains were so heavy that many motorists had to stop their cars, afraid to drive further due to poor visibility.

Douglas said he had also called on relevant agencies to be on standby for prompt mitigation measures.

"They must also ensure that the flood warning systems in all states are in proper working condition," he said.

As at yesterday, 870 flood victims were evacuated to several relief centres as the National Security Council issued flood alerts in Ledang (Johor), Manjung (Perak), Alor Gajah (Malacca) and Sri Aman (Sarawak).

Douglas said the severe floods in Thailand that lasted for weeks was also a result of global climate change.

"We will look into concerted efforts to address this change," said Douglas, who is in Durban, South Africa, for the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

Meteorological Department director-general Dr Yap Kok Seng said the current La Nina phenomenon provided "favourable conditions" for thunderstorms.

The department has issued a warning on strong winds and rough seas.

"Thunderstorms over waters off Selangor, east Johor (Kota Tinggi), Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan, Kuching, Labuan, Sabah (interior, west coast and Sandakan), Straits of Malacca and Layang-Layang are expected to continue."