

Too much water to handle

Flood prevention system to be re-evaluated, says Muhyiddin

PETALING JAYA: The flood prevention system for the Klang Valley will be re-evaluated following widespread flash floods that caused chaos in many places.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said a re-evaluation was needed as the current continuous heavy rain might be too much for the culverts and water channels both in the city and outskirts to handle.

"The heavy downpour resulted in many flash floods despite the SMART tunnel."

"We have to find a way to resolve the problem as the capacity of our channels may not be able to sustain the current huge amounts of water," he said yesterday when asked about Wednesday's massive flash floods.

He said discussions would be held with the Selangor state government to find the best flood mitigation system for the Klang Valley.

Meanwhile, Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalid Ibrahim wants Puncak Niaga Sdn Bhd and Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Syabas) to explain ways to drain water from dams to avoid floods.

Khalid told reporters after visiting victims of the Hulu Langat flash floods that the state government would also study how to reduce water retention to enable floodwaters to be quickly drained from flood-prone areas.

Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil also visited the flood victims at the same centre.

Heavy rains on Wednesday night caused the Semenyih river to over-



Equal misery: Abdul Halim Ariffin (right) and his family members removing furniture at their flood-hit house in Kampung Bukit Sungai Puteh, Ampang yesterday. — Bernama

flow and flood settlements along its banks.

A total of 1,350 people from eight residential areas in Hulu Langat were evacuated to seven centres on Wednesday night.

The heavy and incessant rain in the Klang Valley had also caused river water to overflow into two water treatment plants in Ampang and Sungai Langat, resulting in thousands of people having to go without water for the next three days.

According to Syabas chief executive officer Datuk Ruslan Hassan, the three areas that would be affected by water shortage and low water pressure were the Gombak district, Kuala Lumpur and Hulu Langat.

Some 35,000 people are expected to face problems including those in Kampung Ampang Campuran, Lembah Jaya Utara, Kampung Tasek Permai, Kampung Tasek Tambahan Ampang, Mesra Ria Apartment, Taman Dagang Jaya, Taman Ampang

Saujana, Lembah Jaya Selatan, Kampung Ampang Indah, Mulia Jaya and Kampung Bukit Sungai Putih.

Ruslan said they have deployed 15 water tanks to supply water to the affected residents.

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Thursday morning blues for thousands

PETALING JAYA: Thousands driving to work got the morning blues when they were caught in a gridlock in certain parts of the Klang Valley.

Yesterday morning was not a good time to be on the road as the effects of the downpour the night before had yet to evaporate.

Motorists made their frustrations known, as well as kept each other informed of the traffic situation, via popular micro-blogging site Twitter.

"Crazy Kajang-Cheras traffic going into KL. I'm turning back home," tweeted @wansaiful, CEO of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs at 9am.

He attached a picture of gridlocked traffic beneath grey skies.

Crazy Kajang-Cheras traffic going into KL. I'm turning back home.

— @WANSAINFUL

Subang Jaya assemblyman Hannah Yeoh tweeted photos of soil erosion and damage.

"More than 200 cars damaged by the flood, Klang River overflowed into anak Sungai Penaga," she tweeted.

Other users made use of the #kltraffic and #kltu hashtags to warn other drivers of crawling traffic, standstills and water levels which had not receded.

A traffic jam leading into the city centre was also reported on the North-South Expressway at the Sungai Besi toll plaza at 6.30am following the closure of the SMART tunnel at 8pm on Wednesday due to heavy rain and to activate the flood tunnel.

The heavy rain began on Wednesday evening, temporarily flooding areas such as Lebu Ampang, Jalan Pinang, Kampung Baru, Ampang, Taman Kosas, Jalan Bangsar and Jalan Sultan Ismail. One of the worst-hit areas was Hulu Langat.

Meanwhile, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) officials were on high alert at Jalan Robson, which was reopened yesterday following its closure for cleaning and safety reasons after mudslides on Wednesday night.

A DBKL official in charge of post-flood clearing up said if heavy rains recurred, they would have to close the road again because the earth there was still very soft.

The mudslides happened between 8.30pm and 9pm at three locations on a 500m stretch of the road.

Jalan Robson resident Datuk Amir Singh said the road had experienced repeated mudslides.

He complained that his house would usually get flooded when it poured as the shallow drains along the road became clogged with soil and would overflow.

Victims recall brush with wrath of nature

PETALING JAYA: Forty-five-year-old Abdul Samad Ali had the fright of his life when he heard the sound of rushing water and looked out of his window to see the entire backyard being flooded.

"I panicked and shouted to my wife to help me close our backdoor to prevent the water from entering our house."

"Within minutes, the water level had risen to the knees and the current was so strong that it felt like there was a river in our backyard," said the food stall owner from Lorong Kolam Air Lama, Ampang Jaya yesterday.

Another resident, businessman Stanley Lim, said he saw part of the wall at the sewage treatment pond opposite his house collapse.

"Rain water mixed with water and waste from the pond was rushing into my front porch."

"The water came with such force that it caused one of my compound walls to collapse," he said.

He said the flood had cost him over RM200,000 in damages to his house and cars.

SPCA Selangor office manager M. Chelvy said fund-raising merchandise worth RM3,000 stored at the shelter were ruined by the floodwaters.

"However, we managed to carry all the animals to safety," she said.



Wet cycle: Hulu Langat's Kampung Sungai Serai residents trying to live normally despite the floods yesterday. — Bernama

Meanwhile, some 1,000 families living along the 15km flood-hit stretch of Jalan Hulu Langat were driven out of their homes before they could save their belongings.

Residents said they were caught off-guard when the water rose up to a metre within 20 minutes.

Fuziah Md Saad, 44, from Taman Sri Nanding, said she had no time to save her personal documents or

move her cars before leaving for higher ground across the road with her two daughters.

"At about 11pm, I looked out the window and saw water already in my porch. The water usually does not come into the house during heavy rain, but this time around it was flowing in from the front and back doors within minutes," she said.

Retiree Ahmad Zawawi Kamsah, 65, said he and his wife spent the night in the rain, perched atop a car while watching floodwaters sweep through their home of 20 years.

"We got hit the worst because the houses here are two hundred metres from the riverbank," he said.

"This is the worst flood in 20 years. There was one a few years ago but it was not as bad as this."

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For more stories and pix



Gridlocked: Vehicles crawling at a snail's pace due to the heavy rains and the closure of the SMART tunnel at Jalan Sg Besi in Kuala Lumpur.



Fatal landslide: Guards patrolling the landslide area at Jalan Belfield in Kampung Attap where Raja Mohd Irfan was trapped in heavy mud before he died at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

When it rains, it pours

TRAFFIC jams, landslips, damaged homes, displaced residents – and worse, the death of 13-year-old Raja Mohd Irfan Raja Hazlan.

Heavy rains on Wednesday evening created havoc and disrupted lives in Klang Valley.

Many woke up yesterday to find their day made tedious by being stuck in traffic jams and having to clean up mud-stained houses.

These are some scenes from the floods.



Water disaster: Villagers placing their furniture outside to dry and cleaning up the mess (left) after their homes were flooded from heavy rains on Wednesday night at Kampung Bukit Sungai Putih in Lembah Jaya Utara, Ampang.



Temporary relief:

Displaced residents resting at a relief centre in Kampung Bukit Sungai Putih yesterday.



Slippery slope: The stretch of road leading to the Thean Hou temple in Kuala Lumpur was cordoned off.