

Downpour wreaks havoc



Massive: MRT workers pushing a stalled car in knee-deep flood waters near Menara Star in Section 16 (left) as traffic builds up (above).

Heavy rain uproots trees and causes flash floods in several areas

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PETALING JAYA: A heavy evening downpour accompanied by strong winds wreaked havoc here and around the Kuala Lumpur city centre yesterday, uprooting trees and leaving flash floods in its wake.

The downpour came as the Meteorological Department warned almost every day until early May, even as the possibility of extended water rationing looms in the state and many parts of the city.

Yesterday's downpour started around 4.45pm and caused flash floods at the Dato Onn roundabout in Jalan Kinabalu, the Sungai Besi toll headed towards UPM, the Serdang KTM station and the Sprint Highway near the Section 16 Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station construction works.

Near Menara Star in Section 16, MRT workers were seen walking knee-deep in flood waters, pushing a stalled car through traffic at the highway underpass.



Bumper-to-bumper: The massive jam at Sungai Besi after the heavy rain.

At the Besraya Highway, three lanes merged into one at the road near the Serdang KTM station as motorists manoeuvred through muddy flood waters.

Meteorological Department central forecasting office director Muhammad Helmi Abdullah said the pattern of almost daily rain was expected during the current inter-monsoon season.

"We can expect thunderstorms and heavy downpour as well as

strong wind gusts, especially in low-lying areas.

"Urban areas are more prone to flash floods during this period and so we are likely to see heavy traffic jams almost daily," he said when contacted yesterday.

He said lightning would occur frequently, advising Malaysians to try to stay indoors from late afternoon till early night.

This weather pattern, he said, was seen in the east coast and inner west

coast of the peninsula as well as in Sabah and Sarawak.

"We are hoping that the rain will fall in the areas near the dams in Selangor to help increase the water levels," he added.

Yesterday evening saw traffic slow moving in most major roads in the city centre, with Malaysian Highway Authority officials reporting traffic to be at a standstill on both sides along Jalan Hang Tuah.

Traffic from Bandar Sunway heading towards the Kewajipan roundabout in Subang Jaya was also at a standstill.

Traffic from MRR2 from Bukit Jalil heading towards the city centre, Subang to Dataran Prima and Kota Damansara as well as on the Kerinchi Link towards the Federal Highway was also slow moving, while officials reported of a crawl from Bandar Utama to Taman Tun Dr Ismail and from Kelana Jaya to SS2.

In Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and Fire and Rescue Department officers reported four fallen trees as a result of the strong winds.