



Wet morning:
Vehicles making their way through floodwaters at Tingkat Mak Mandin in Butterworth, Penang. — ASRI ABDUL GHANI / The Star

Rain and flash floods bring traffic to a halt in Penang

GEORGE TOWN: A 15-minute trip to work by car turned into a two-hour nightmare for assistant company secretary Loke See Mun due to the heavy rain which hit Penang.

"I left my home in Jalan Lim Lean Teng and came across the traffic which was at a standstill in Jalan Terengganu at 8am. I decided to wait out the traffic and only reached my office in Jalan Yeap Chor Ee at 10am.

"The wet season must be back," said the 24-year-old woman.

Henry Butcher Penang vice-president Max Wong was not so lucky as he was stuck on the Penang Bridge for nearly two hours.

"It has never happened to me before. What a tiring morning," he said, adding that he only reached

his office in Jalan Burma at 10.30am.

Wong and Loke were among thousands of Penangites who were late for work yesterday as traffic was almost at a standstill along all the main roads, no thanks to the rain which started at about 3am, flash floods and two accidents.

The accidents included a four-car pile-up near The Light Waterfront along Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu Expressway and a car-and-taxi collision along Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah near the Penang Skills Development Centre.

A human resources manager in a multinational corporation, who declined to be named, said more than 20% of her workforce were late.

"The morning crawl was horri-

ble. My colleagues came in grumbling about the two accidents and the rain, which upset all of our meeting schedules," she said.

Low-lying roads around Jalan Burma, Jalan Dato Keramat and within the heritage enclave became flooded and created bottlenecks as motorists slowed down or veered to avoid floodwaters.

Penang Island City Council (MBPP) workers were seen in many parts of the city, clearing the clogged drains to ease the water flow.

Jalan P. Ramlee resident Mohd Shukor Mohd Don, 51, who lives 30m from Sungai Pinang, said motorists were lucky it was low tide.

"It was flooded here at 3am. My house had about 20cm of water. But

I am used to it. I grew up here. No matter how the government digs the river, it still floods when it is high tide with heavy rain," he said.

On the mainland, floods hit Taman Cantik off Jalan Permatang Pauh and the roads along SJK (Tamil) Mak Mandin and the Sungai Nyior toll plaza of the Butterworth-Kulim Expressway.

The flood also inconvenienced road users, especially school children and office workers, as traffic slowed to a crawl along low-lying roads.

However, there were no untoward incidents.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department website forecasts cloudy and rainy days for Penang until Tuesday.