

Thunderstorms hit Penang

'SUPERMOON 2':
Flash floods reduce traffic to a crawl

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A SECOND round of "super-moon" thunderstorms have wreaked havoc, flooding the downtown area here, barely 48 hours after the first one on Monday. The downpour began on the mainland at 5am yesterday and gradually shifted to the island with 11kph wind gusts. Rainfall data showed that the rain was heaviest between 6am and 7am. However, the downpour turned into light showers at 8am and flood-

waters receded two hours later in low-lying areas.

As a result, flash floods hit main roads, such as Jalan Transfer, Jalan Hutton, the suburbs of Lebuhraya Pykett and Jalan Westlands.

Most of the main roads here were in gridlock during morning rush hour and many Penangites tweeted that they were late for work.

Residents around Pykett and Westland were up in arms over the incessant flooding in their neighbourhoods.

Eric Cheah, 51, called on the authorities to upgrade the drainage system.

Checks by the *New Straits Times* found that the Wesley Methodist School's field was flooded.

A municipal contractor, who wished to remain anonymous, said the school's fencing had no water outlets to the drains.

"The flooding is mainly due to the

fact that there is no proper drainage system connecting the field to the monsoon drains outside."

The Citizen Awareness Chant Group has criticised the state government for ineffective flood mitigation.

"The state government has been gloating on how millions of ringgit had been spent on flood mitigation.

"The Pykett area has been known to be a flood-prone area for many years.

"Why is it still flooding after the millions spent on flood mitigation?" the group asked yesterday.

In **Butterworth**, water from a drain overflowed onto the road in the Mak Mandin industrial estate.

Water puddles were seen in low-lying areas in Jalan Mak Mandin when heavy rain hit the mainland at 6am.

Motorists waded in ankle-deep water as traffic in and out of the light

industry area, off Jalan Permatang Pauh, was reduced to a crawl.

Several flood-prone areas were hit by flash floods in Taman Mangga, Kampung Tanah Liat, Padang Lalang and Permatang Rawa.

However, the water level receded at 8.30am when the rain stopped at 8am.

On Monday, 500 homes were affected when a four-hour "super-moon" thunderstorm ravaged many parts of the state.

Authorities say Penang experiences the heaviest of rain on the seventh and eight lunar (full moon) days.

The "supermoon" phenomenon occurs when the northwest and southwest winds blow from the Indian Ocean.

It also occurs when the moon is closest to Earth. During the phenomenon, the moon appears 14 per cent larger and 30 per cent brighter