



Soggy weather: Motorists braving a rainstorm at Jalan Stadium in Alor Setar, Kedah.

Drainage dept ready for action in case of floods

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GEORGE TOWN: The Drainage and Irrigation Department is ready to spring into action should floods occur.

Its deputy director S. Ratna Raja said all rivers had been designed with a 100-year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) of rainfall.

“As we live on an island, we have to deal with high tides as well.

“We will pump water from the rivers into the sea to ensure that there is no major flooding,” he said yesterday.

Ratna Raja said the department would also carry out regular maintenance of the rivers and monsoon drains to ensure they were functioning normally.

In **Butterworth**, the Seberang Prai Municipal Council’s “Special Squad” is tasked with responding to and operating during emergency situations.

“The squad will clean up the drains and ensure that they are not clogged. They are also trained to chop down trees,” said council secretary Rozali Mohamad yesterday.

In **Alor Setar**, state Housing and Local Government Committee chairman Datuk Badrul Hisham Hashim said Merbok needed another water plant to solve the water issue.

“We can no longer rely on the Gunung Jerai reservoir because the population here is growing.

“It’s a long-term plan to build the plant, which will have a different mechanism from the Tupah and Merbok plants.

“In the meantime, we are looking for sources of water to be channelled to the Tupah and Merbok plants pending the construction of a new plant,” he told a press conference after launching the Mangrove Tree Planting Programme in Merbok yesterday.

More than 10,000 people here had complained about their water supply in the last two months due to the El Nino phenomenon.