Clogged drains may have caused floods

KUALA LUMPUR: The flash floods that stopped traffic and submerged over 115 vehicles last week could have been due to clogged drain outlets and culverts and not the heavy rainfall alone, said the Institute of Engineers.

Its president Tan Yean Chin said that during a downpour, silt and debris could have been washed and deposited at the outlets of drainage systems and culverts, clogging them.

The accumulation of earth deposits, silt and debris at the bottom of drains and culverts, he said, would reduce the cross-sectional area and impede their capacity to carry away water at the speed they were designed for.

New developments, he added, should take into account best management practices such as providing enough drainage systems.

"We would like to recommend that for new developments in the Klang Valley, the zero-additional discharge principle be imposed on developers as one of the approval conditions.

"This means that new developments approved must not contribute to additional surface water runoff," he said, adding that ongoing construction works nearby could also have caused the floods.

"Contractors must adopt a professional approach and use authorised hydrological data from the Drainage and Irrigation Department in the design of temporary drainage systems during construction works.

"Best management practices regarding silt traps, culverts and drains must also be incorporated," said Tan, adding that strict enforcement was important.

Among the areas affected by the flash floods on Thursday were Jalan Pantai Baru, Jalan Bangsar, Jalan Lingkungan Budi in Universiti Malaya, Jalan Semantan and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Halim.