

# Govt says sorry for floods

FT Minister: Rubbish-clogged drains couldn't cope with high volume of rainwater

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THE Government has apologised to Kuala Lumpur folk for the floods caused by the unusual heavy rainfall on Thursday night.

Expressing his apology to the *rakyat*, Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor said the copious amount of rain that reached a high of 122.8mm per hour was the main cause of the floods.

He also acknowledged that another source of the problem was rubbish found in the drains because of rampant littering.

The two-hour downpour that started about 6pm overwhelmed drivers stuck in traffic, submerging more than 115 vehicles.

Among the main areas affected were Jalan Pantai Baru, Jalan Bangsar, Jalan Lingkungan Budi in Universiti Malaya, Jalan Semantan and Jalan Tuanku Abdul Halim.

"Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) had a specialist team visit the sites and found some drains clogged by rubbish such as plastic bags.

"I have informed the Kuala Lumpur mayor and we are calling for a special meeting with Alam Flora Sdn Bhd which is the contractor cleaning and maintaining the city's drains.

"I have asked Alam Flora to buck up and also ask for the public's cooperation to not litter on the streets.

A DBKL spokesman said drainage in the city were built when the roads were constructed.

"We provide roadside drains to gather surface run-off that is then funnelled into the river – every road has this infrastructure.

"Normally, flash floods occur because of the high intensity of the rainfall.

"Yesterday's rainfall was considered very high, at more than 100mm per hour, so the drain could not cope with the amount of water.

"When designing the drains, DBKL takes into account a

100-year return period with a capacity in accordance to the Drainage and Irrigation Department standards," he added.

"The 100-year return period in terms of

rainfall is basically a calculation on the probability of such storms occurring over a period of 100 years.

"In other words, the probability of rainfall per hour amounting to as high as it did, was estimated to be 1% in any one year," he added.

The spokesman said it was unlikely that construction of buildings or transportation systems caused the floods.

"Most of the time, in the case of construction, it is mud that causes drains to become silted.

"But for any earth work, DBKL has made it a requirement to have a silt trap to prevent the drains from getting clogged," he said.

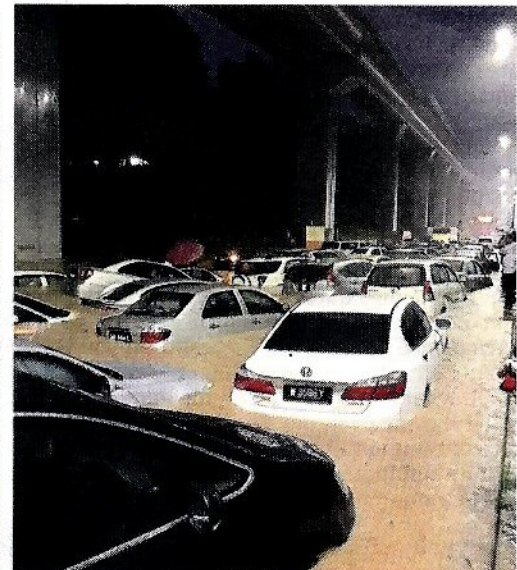
He said DBKL planned to include a special allocation to improve the main drains in its future budget.

"But the main thing to prevent floods from happening again, is maintenance," he said.

The SMART Tunnel was in operation and closed to the public as a precautionary measure, he said, adding that the flooded zones were not within the SMART Tunnel's catchment area.



Traffic chaos in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Halim during the flash flood.  
(Pic taken from Facebook)



Flash flood swept two cars away in Jalan Semantan.  
—Photo courtesy of BOMBA