

Rude awakening for storm victims

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TREES fell and roofs flew away while people slept during the two-hour storm that beset Penang and Kedah.

A family in Batu Maung were trapped in their house when part of a large tree toppled onto their home early yesterday morning.

"Everyone was sleeping when we suddenly heard a loud crash. Luckily my sons and nephew could escape and help the rest of us.

"When the tree fell on our house, rain began pouring in and destroyed most our belongings," S. Murugiah, 55, said yesterday.

His mother, K. Pachiamal, 71, was trapped in her bedroom and was the last to escape, while the family's children, daughter-in-law and grandchildren scaled the walls of their bedrooms to get out at 12.40am yesterday.

It was almost deja vu for the family, because Murugiah said another tree fell on their



Several cars were damaged by a fallen tree following the storm and heavy rain at the Permata Apartment in Bandar Baru Perda, Bukit Mertajam.

house in 2003.

Nearby, along Jalan Damar 1, taxi driver Omar Ibrahim, 65, and his family members woke up in shock when their zinc roof

flew away.

The roof landed beside the house, leaving them and their belongings drenched in the rain.

"This is the first time we faced

this," said the father of two.

The family ate their sahur meal for the Muslim fasting month in a nearby tomyam stall and are temporarily staying with a neighbour.

Batu Maung assemblyman Datuk Abdul Halim Hussain visited both families and presented them with RM300 each from the Social Welfare Department, which also supplied mats and toiletries.

He said technicians from the district office will assess the damage to both houses for the state to give a 10% compensation from the TYT Disaster Relief Fund to help with repairs.

Penang Island City Council mayor Yew Tung Seang said about 200 city council workers were deployed to clear up the mess in the streets from 2am.

He said on the island, 24 trees and a lamp post fell in the incident.

"As of 5.43am, the floods began receding in areas like Jalan P. Ramlee, Lintang P. Ramlee, Lorong Kulit, Jalan Gemas and Jalan Langkawi," he said.

Mohd Azmi using a scoop net to collect plastic bottles and aluminium which got stuck at Sungai Juru after a flash flood hit Kampung Permatang Rawa in Bukit Mertajam.

