

**Penang storm aftermath: Clearing and repair work under way**  
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**By Opalyn Mok**

GEORGE TOWN, June 14 — The freak storm last night wrought damage all over the state, the worst in Jalan Macalister where a lightning arrester fell off the Umno building, killing a man and injuring many others.

Two people were killed last night, one a Penang Water Supply Corporation employee when a tree fell on him while he was his way back after work and the other a lorry co-driver who was killed when the lightning arrester along with a section of a concrete beam fell on the lorry.

Today, a few hundred households around the affected site in Jalan Macalister such as at Datuk Keramat, River Road, Kampung Jawa and Jalan Anson suffered a water supply interruption as the beam had damaged an underground water main.

The 20m beam also left a gaping hole in the middle of Jalan Macalister and the normally busy road has been closed to traffic since the storm last night.

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, who visited the site this morning, said the main focus now is to clear up the debris and repair the road and open it to traffic as soon as possible.

Datuk Adzmi Ariffin, CEO of Umno building owner JKP Sdn Bhd, who also visited the site, said it was getting a crane in to remove hanging metal parts of the 21-storey building that may pose a danger to public.

Though named Menara Umno, the building was sold to JKP in 2005 and is now under its management.

"We conduct regular management work on the building and did not expect this to happen at all," Adzmi told the press.

He said the company would clear up the debris and repair the road immediately.

"We expect to complete repair work in two days," he said.

He also said the company would give aid to affected victims, including the family of the man killed in the lorry.

He confirmed that the structure which fell on the road was the lightning arrester and the concrete beam that it was attached to.

Earlier, Lim said initial reports received showed there were more than 260 cases of fallen trees that had damaged electric cables all around the state.

"There were also reports of houses where roofs were blown off," he said.

Lim has called for an emergency meeting with relevant government agencies and he will propose that first priority is to repair the roofs of houses involved.

"Since this is an emergency situation, we will not call for open tender to repair the houses but will directly appoint contractors to conduct the repair work," he said.

All workers from all relevant departments will be required to work overtime to assist in clearing and repair work.

"All state assemblymen are also required to go down to the ground to give aid to those affected," he said.

Lim said the relevant departments would conduct investigations into the incident once clearing work has been completed.

"I am sure JKP will also investigate the cause of the structure falling off the building," he said.

He hoped Jalan Macalister would be repaired and be re-opened to traffic as soon as possible.

The road is one of the main roads running through George Town which connects to Komtar.

The state government will also be giving aid to the families of the two killed in the storm.

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