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Ambrin promises thorough check

PUTRAJAYA: It is indeed a formidable task - 72 government buildings in Putrajaya, 22 in Kuala Lumpur and another 168 rented offices, and probably piles of paperwork. But, Auditor-General Tan Sri Ambrin Buang is promising that the team set up to inspect the government buildings in the wake of recent mishaps ranging from burst pipes to collapsed ceilings will be thorough. "We established the team on May 11 and in our first round, we inspected four buildings in Putrajaya – the Immigration Department, the National Registration Department and the Entrepreneurial Development and Cooperative Ministry, which are located along the Boulevard in Precinct 2, and the Road Transport Department in Parcel D.



Shock leak: File picture showing water pouring down from the ceiling at the Immigration Department in Putrajaya after a massive pipe leak which caused services to be suspended at the office on April 11.

"Initially, our mandate was to concentrate on Putrajaya but now, this has been widened to Kuala Lumpur," he said yesterday. Ambrin said the Government had ordered a total audit of all these buildings. "First, we will check what the complaints regarding a particular building are, and whether these have been attended to or not. We will also check for the cause of damage and if this was due to design, material, poor workmanship or simply because the workers were not paid on time.

"A total audit of the buildings will involve both physical checks, from the roof and piping, as well as perusing all the financial records and documents relating to the construction and maintenance of the buildings, and whether these adhere to best practices. We will be meticulous," he assured. Based on the initial inspection of the four buildings, Ambrin said the team had formed "some ideas," but reiterated that they still had a long way to go.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had ordered the audit of government buildings

after a series of mishaps at public premises, like a leaking pipe at the Immigration headquarters on April 11, the collapse of a ceiling at the Entrepreneurial Development and Cooperative Ministry's multipurpose hall on April 28, and falling ceiling panels at the newly opened Jalan Duta court complex in Kuala Lumpur more recently. Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu subsequently announced the formation of the team, to be headed by Ambrin.

The Auditor-General said his department, which was located beside the Immigration headquarters, had also had its share of problems. Asked if the findings would be published, Ambrin said that while he did not have a problem with it, the team had yet to decide on this.