

Heavy rains expected again for east coast and north from today until Saturday

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KEMAMAN: A day after heavy rain and floods, there were clear blue skies over here and Kuala Terengganu as the waters receded from many of the flooded areas – but it could be a short-lived relief.

A “yellow stage” warning for heavy rains has been issued by the Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) for the east coast and north of the peninsula.

The department said heavy rain was expected over Terengganu, Kelantan, Perlis, Kedah, Penang and northern Perak beginning today until Saturday.

A yellow alert rating, according to MetMalaysia, indicated heavy rainfall is expected to occur within one to three days.

Eighty-seven people from Kemaman and Kuala Terengganu were forced to take refuge in several evacuation shelters after the rapid rise of flood waters on Tuesday and early yesterday. Many remain worried about the coming weeks.

Fisherman Salleh Abu Bakar, 56, from Kampung Gong Cengal here, said the coast in Kemaman was set to see high tide of up to 3.5m.

“We have started to move whatever we can to higher ground but we are worried about the coming days and month. I’m worried about what will happen if it gets worse than this.

“We were quite lucky that we were informed about the rising waters on Tuesday, allowing us to be prepared,” he said when met at the flood evacuation centre in SMK Badrul Alam Shah here yesterday.

Single mother Tuan Norhayati Tuan Ahmat, 31, is thinking of moving from her rented house in Kg Baru Kemaman.

“Tuesday was my first time experiencing such floods. What I saw frightened me. I was helpless,” said Tuan Norhayati, who was stuck at home with her two children, aged 10 months and eight years.

“I was lucky that my neighbours helped me and asked me to shift to the evacuation centre. The water rose very fast. I am worried that this is just the beginning,” she said.

Zamrah Abdullah, 50, from Kampung Sarang Lang, said she preferred to stay at the centre for the time being as she found it diffi-

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“We are also seeing high tide at the same time,” she said.

Torminah Sardi, 58, who was cleaning her house in Kampung Baru Kanan, said she believed the worst was yet to come.

“We all know what happened in the 2013 floods and how bad it was. We hope nothing like that will happen again,” she said.

All evacuation centres in Kemaman were closed yesterday, leaving only the one in SK Chendering in Kuala Terengganu open with three families still taking shelter.

“The weather has been good so far without any more rain,” said state Civil Defence Force deputy director Amirsarafudin Zalman, adding that authorities were however on standby after the yellow alert warning issued by MetMalaysia.

The National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) has advised all relevant agencies to open operation centres following the yellow alert.

Nadma said proactive steps should be taken to prepare for possible floods at the district levels.

The agencies were also urged to send the phone numbers of their respective district operations centres to the National Disaster Command Centre.

The public flood information website, under the Department of Drainage and Irrigation (DID), also warned of possible flash floods due to the northeast monsoon.