

Water control gate blamed

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KUCHING: Seven villages were flooded here yesterday following heavy rain.

And the villagers from Sungai Bundong, Terasi Iban, Terasi Melayu/Jawa, Jemukan Cina, Sadong Jaya Ulu, Rangan Laut, and Semera Ulu are attributing this to the malfunctioning of the water control gate there.

One of the residents, Jamil Ramizan, 39, said the villages would not be flooded if the water control gate had been working.

"This village has never experienced floods when the gate was functioning," said Ramizan.

Another villager Nasir Mahmud, 35, said the water was only ankle-deep at 2am and rose to waist-level at 3am.

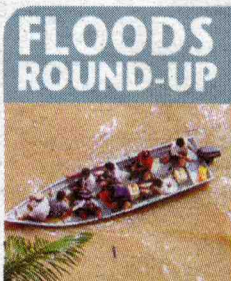
"I was at work and had to return home when my wife told me what had happened.

"It was like swimming in the dark just to reach my house," said Nasir.

Sadong Jaya district officer Mohd Annie Wahab said the floods had affected about 300 homes in the seven villages. The water began to recede at 5pm.

"It is still early to say if things are getting back to normal. With the rainy season, the conditions are unpredictable," he said, adding that the water control gate repair was being repaired.

More than a hundred resi-



dents of Rumah Likung in Balleh, Kapit were evacuated from their homes due to a mudslide which destroyed three units of a 22-room long-house and 18 other houses on Thursday night. No one was injured.

The residents are being housed at the nearby Sekolah Kebangsaan Lepong Baleh.

Meanwhile, residents living in low-lying areas in Bau, Batu Kawa and Satok have been told to get ready to move out as floods are expected in the next 24 hours.

Heavy rain has been falling over the catchment area of Sungai Sarawak Kanan in Bau district over the past 24 hours.

"We had more than 160mm of rain — the highest in 10 years — recorded over the catchment area since Thursday. Now, the Sungai Sarawak Kanan is threatening to overflow," Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr George Chan said yesterday.

"I am giving the people residing in low-lying areas, especially in Batu Kawa and Satok, to get themselves ready to move to higher ground," he told reporters yesterday.



Housewife Awa Logon collecting cooking utensils and plastic plates after her home at Kampung Jemukan Cin in Sadong Jaya, Asajaya was flooded yesterday.

Dr Chan, who is also the chairman of the state Disaster and Relief Management Committee, said the villages in Bau and Batu Kawa expected to be flooded over the next 24 hours were Kampung Keranji, Kampung Siniawan, Kampung Lidah Tanah, Kampung Bijuray, Kampung Sebuloh and Kampung Krokong.

He asked the villagers to start moving to higher ground or start shifting their vehicles and other valuables elsewhere.

He said the 18 evacuation centres in Bau, Batu Kawa and Satok areas were ready for use.

The centres include Balai Raya Batu Kitang, Masjid

Kampung Keranji, Balai Raya Kampung Lidah Tanah, Balai Raya Kampung Bogag, Balai Raya Suba Buan, Balai Raya Stenggang, Balai Raya Kampung Sebuloh, Masjid Kampung Buso, SJK Chung Hua Tondong and Balai Siniawan.

Dr Chan said heavy rain was expected over the coastal areas of Sarawak until Monday.