

Flooded north

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Thousands forced to flee as rising waters wreak havoc

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KANGAR: Thousands of people were forced to abandon their homes and seek shelter in temporary centres when pouring rain caused havoc in the northern states of Kedah and Perlis.

About a hundred people were also evacuated from Kelantan and Terengganu as a precautionary measure after water in several main rivers breached the danger level.

Drainage and Irrigation Department director of water resources and hydrology Hanafi Mohamad Noor fears that if heavy rain which started on Sunday continues, the big flood of 2005 will recur.

During the big flood, water covered the whole state in the worst such incident in 30 years.

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DID fears flooded state will be submerged

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As of yesterday, 1,218 people from 17 villages were evacuated to 10 relief centres in the state.

"Many villages, especially in the Padang Besar area and downstream of the (Timah Tasuh) dam, are already flooded. If the heavy rain continues, Kangar is expected to be submerged soon," he said in a text message to *The Star*.

Hanafi said water from the dam was released this morning after it reached the maximum level of 30m.

In Kedah, more than 2,000 people from more than 35 villages in two districts were moved to relief centres.

Among the villages were Kampung Paya Lantau, Kampung Padang Pasir, Kampung Tanjung, Kampung Labi, and Kampung Bendang Raja.

Padang Terap flood operations centre officer Nurul Aziati Ahmad Salmi said water level at Sungai Kuala Nerang was 19.01m, about 2m above the danger level of 17.07m.

Hundreds of motorists also got stuck in massive traffic jams when both sides of the North-South Expressway in Changlun were closed since 1pm yesterday.

The expressway was submerged under 2m of water.

Signboards were put up to tell motorists travelling between Bukit Kayu Hitam and Changlun to use the Changlun-Kuala Perlis highway instead.

In **KELANTAN**, **FARIK ZOLKEPLI** reports that 46 people were moved to four evacuation centres in Pasir Mas and Tanah Merah after the



Hut island: Padi farmer Sian Cheugi, 38, with his dog named 'Dam' resting in a hut used to keep padi planting equipment and harvested padi in the middle of his padi field at Kampung Kubang Chenok, Jitra, Kedah which was inundated by flood water, after three days of downpour yesterday. Kampung Kubang Chenok is about 40km from Alor Setar.

water level breached the danger point in most of the main rivers as of 8.45pm yesterday.

Kelantan DID officer Shaari Harun said water level in Sungai Golok in Jenob was also above the danger level at 23.7m while the level of the river in Rantau Panjang had reached

9.67m, beyond the danger level.

The water level of Sungai Kelantan in Kuala Krai and Kusial were nearing the danger level as well.

In **KUALA TERENGGANU**, **R.S.N. MURALI** reports that 84 people were evacuated from villages in Ulu Besut due to flash floods.

The heavy rain also damaged a part of the ceiling on the fifth floor of the new Socso state branch office in Jalan Batas Baru.

The contractor was still bound by warranty to fix the damage, said customer service manager Azahar Md Nadzri.