



Kampung Panggas Besar villagers evacuating their houses yesterday. — NST picture by Rizal Braim

# Flash-flood alert in Perlis, Kedah

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**KANGAR:** The Meteorological Department has declared a red alert in Perlis following intermittent and heavy rain which has caused many low-lying areas to be up to two metres in water.

Although there are no casualties, flooding could worsen as the water levels at the rivers and Timah Tasoh dam have breached the alert level.

A red alert is declared if forecasts indicate flooding in low-lying areas, especially near rivers, swift water currents which can be dangerous to

children and boats, and danger of thatched or zinc roofs being blown away.

At press time, more than 1,400 people from five villages in Titi Tinggi, Wang Kelian, Batu Bertangkup, Panggas Beseri and Kampung Bakau were evacuated to higher grounds after water overflowed river banks and were almost shoulder-high.

Except for the Kangar-Padang Besar trunk road, most smaller roads to the popular tourist destination near the Malaysia-Thai border were closed.

Perlis Water and Irrigation Department director Nishad Mohamad Shafie said the water levels at Timah

Tasoh dam and the two main rivers, Sungai Jarum and Sungai Pelarit, reached critical levels since mid-day Sunday.

The water level at the dam was 29.8m, about 0.2m above the danger level.

This has forced the department to release water from four floodgates at the dam at 8pm on the same day.

Nishad said if the rain clouds do not clear up soon, the department would be forced to open six more floodgates at the dam.

Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Md Isa Sabu said the state was experiencing once of the worst floods since 2005.

## 84 villagers evacuated

**KUALA TERENGGANU:** Heavy rains over the weekend signalled the start of the monsoon season in the East Coast, forcing families to seek shelter at relief centres when their homes were inundated with water.

Eighty-four villagers in Besut were evacuated yesterday as three major rivers in Terengganu breached their alert levels and low-lying areas of Kampung Anak Ikan, Kampung Renek and Kampung Paya were flooded.

Most parts of the state experienced heavy and continuous rain since Sunday, especially in the coastal areas.

As of 8am yesterday, the water level of Sungai Besut, at the Keruak bridge and Kampung La in Besut, and Sungai Setiu in Kampung Besut, all breached the alert level.

The water level receded slightly as the day progressed.

All other major river points in the state recorded a sharp rise, but re-

mained within the normal level.

State Drainage and Irrigation director Mat Hussin Ghani said authorities did not expect major floods in Terengganu this year, but remained cautious due to the unpredictable weather pattern. He said the average yearly rainfall in Terengganu hovered between 3,000mm and 3,500mm.

Last year, the state experienced rainfall of about 4,500mm, which saw several districts hit by major floods.

A National Security Council spokesman said its 24-hour operations centre, manned by a five-member team, was activated yesterday.

He said 334 evacuation centres have been put on standby, including 134 new ones, all of which can cater to about 50,000 flood victims.

In Kelantan, the Golok river breached the danger level following heavy rains since Saturday.

State drainage and irrigation director Abu Bakar Mohd Yusof said

the state and the districts operations rooms in Tumpat, Pasir Mas, Tanah Merah and Kuala Krai had been activated since early morning.

He said the operations rooms would open 24 hours with staff manning them in three shifts.

"So far, there is no flood in the state except for the sporadic local floods or flash floods in several areas including Kota Baru which were caused by poor drainage. Rain is expected to continue until Sunday as reported by the Meteorological Department."

As at 5pm, the water level at the station at the Golok river at Jenob was at 23.8m (danger level 23.5m) and the Golok River at Rantau Panjang at 9.4m (danger level 9m).

The Kelantan river has also breached the alert level at two stations at Kuala Krai and Kusial in Tanah Merah.

As at 5pm, the level at Kuala Krai was 20.7m (alert level 20m; danger



Rescuers carrying Md Lazim Yunus in Kampung Tanjong, near Kuala Nerang, yesterday. — NST picture by Shahrizal Md Noor

He said Bintong was also flooded, an area that had never been flooded before.

He added that if the flood situation persists, it was expected to hit Kangar and the south of Perlis.

In Kedah, a red alert has been issued for Kubang Pasu and Padang Terap districts after more than 1,700 people from 320 families were forced to evacuate their homes since yesterday.

A spokesman, attributing the intermittent- to-heavy rain situation to the inter-monsoon changes, said the residents in Padang Terap were evacuated after the water level at Sungai

Kuala Nerang reached 19.5m, about 2.5 metres above the danger level.

He said if precipitation continued, flashfloods could affect neighbouring districts such as Kota Setar and Pokok Sena.

Meanwhile, the North-South Expressway at Km10.5 near Changlun was closed from 2pm yesterday after it was about a metre under water.

This has forced many motorists, including parents intending to visit their children's graduation at Universiti Utara Malaysia in Sintok, in Kubang Pasu, to find temporary accommodation at the nearby Naka and Napoh towns.



Families making do at the SK Tieng flood relief centre in Kota Baru, yesterday. — NST picture by Syamsi Suhaimi

level 25m) and Kusial at 12.8m (alert level 12m; danger level 16m).

At Kg Tieng here, six families were

moved to the flood centre at SK Tieng after their houses were flooded by two metres of water.