



Flood dampener: Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak (centre) accompanied by his relative Ahmad Nayan, 50, (right) and his driver leaving his flooded house in Jalan Sultanah, Alor Setar, Kedah at 11.25am yesterday. He was rushing for an emergency meeting on the flood problem. Reports on Page 3. — G.C. TAN / The Star

Floods hit more areas in Kedah

MB's house among those submerged

ALOR SETAR: Several new areas in Kedah have been hit by floods, including Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak's home at Jalan Sultanah here.

Azizan, who lives in the house with his wife Tok Puah Faekah Sheikh Hamzah and son Mohamad Azizan, 28, moved out from the house at about 11am yesterday after it was submerged in one metre of water.

Also flooded was the compound of the state police contingent at Jalan Stadium.

The number of evacuees in the state has increased to 40,212 as Taman Uda, Lorong Bayu, Taman PKNK and Taman Rakyat in Kota Setar were also hit by floods.

Azizan, when met after chairing a meeting with federal and state government agencies, said 140 relief centres had been opened in Kubang Pasu, Kota Setar, Pokok Sena and Padang Terap.

A National Security Council operations room spokesman said 100 evacuation centres were still open.

Meanwhile, the Langkawi Recreation Club and nine other non-governmental organisations have launched a flood relief fund for the state.

Club president Datuk Mansor Ismail said they hoped to collect as much as possible during the one-month fund-raising period until Dec 5, to be channelled to the flood

victims.

In Kangar, the floods eased slightly yesterday morning, with 1,375 of 15,159 evacuees allowed to return home and 11 of the 55 evacuation centres closed.

But state Drainage and Irrigation Department director Nishad Mohamed Shaffy has warned about the possibility of a second wave of flooding.

He said if there was heavy rainfall in the next few days, the department might be forced to re-open the six floodgates at the Timah Tasoh dam.

The water level in Kangar had subsided significantly but several roads were still impassable to light vehicles.

In Kota Baru, the Kelantan Welfare Department has assured the people that it will be able to provide foodstuff to flood victims for up to 10 days.

Its director, Mohd Noor Chik, said the RM100,000 allocation would ensure there was enough food for evacuees during the period should a second wave of flooding hit the state.

The floods had subsided in Kelantan, with 475 evacuees allowed to return home.

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No decision to postpone exams



Steady hands: Fire and Rescue Department officers carrying former principal of Kolej Sultan Abdul Hamid, Baharuddin Abd Majid, 64, to drier ground after floods inundated his house in Taman Uda, Alor Setar, yesterday. — G.C. TAN / The Star

Chor: Railway project contributed to the problem

PETALING JAYA: The worsening floods in Alor Setar have been attributed in part to the electrified double-tracking railway project.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung said the tracks were preventing floodwaters from flowing out from the affected areas.

He said contingency plans should have been put in place to correct the problem.

Chor said he had informed Transport Minister Datuk Seri Kong Cho Ha of it.

"As a result of the poor outflow, areas which were not seriously flooded before are now submerged in deep water," he said, citing Taman Lumba Kuda, Taman Golf, Taman Rakyat and Taman Malaysia as examples.

Chor, who is Alor Setar MP, stays with his family in Taman Lumba Kuda.

"My house is now under more than a meter deep in water.

"We have been staying there since 1985, and this is the first time our house is flooded.

"There had been floods before but only the roads were inundated," he added.

Kong, however, denied that the project had worsened the floods in the state.

He said it had been confirmed by the Meteorological Department that the floods in Alor Setar were caused by the unusually heavy rainfall.

He said it was unfair to blame the electrified double-tracking project for the floods.

"There is no such project in the east coast and southern Thailand, yet these areas are also flooded due to the abnormal weather phenomenon.

»This is the first time our house is flooded«

DATUK CHOR CHEE HEUNG

"I am not protecting KTM Berhad but I am just looking at the matter objectively," he said.

KTMB in a statement also denied any correlation between the flood situation in Kedah and the rail project.

"The Ipoh-Padang Besar electrified double-tracking project did not contribute at all to the occurrence of such a natural disaster," it said.

KTMB said the project, which started in 2008, was also delayed due to the floods, which had caused the company to lose millions of ringgit.

"This natural disaster does not only bring calamity to the residents living in the surrounding areas but has also disrupted KTMB services," it added.

In a statement, the Meteorological Department said the rain recorded between last Saturday and Wednesday was almost twice the amount recorded from Dec 15-19, 2005, when a major flood occurred in the same area.

"In Alor Setar, the level of rain recorded this time is 207mm, compared with 119mm in December 2005," it said.

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