



Water world:

Kampung Kedai Lama in Rantau Panjang was still inundated yesterday.

Death toll rises in flood-hit East Coast

KOTA BARU: The latest wave of floods in Kelantan claimed two more lives, bringing the death toll to three.

The body of Farid Zulkifli, 17, was found in Sungai Kampung Talak, Chabang Empat, Tumpat at 4pm yesterday by a search team from the Tumpat fire and rescue department.

A Tumpat police spokesman said the victim's body was sent to the mortuary of the Kelaboran Hospital in Tumpat.

However, police have yet to ascertain how the victim drowned.

In **BACHOK**, Mohd Haikal Sobri, eight, a Year Two pupil of Sekolah Kebangsaan Jelawat, drowned after falling into Sungai Lubok Kuing, Gunung at about 5pm yesterday.

Bachok fire and rescue chief Che Malek Omar said the boy was crossing a plank used as a bridge over the swollen river with five friends when he slipped and fell into the river.

On Saturday, Siti Aishah Kamarul Zaman, 10, drowned while playing in floodwaters outside her home in Kampung Limbat, Pasir Tumboh.

The number of evacuees in the state remains high at 3,579 people despite improved weather conditions since yesterday.

A flood operations room spokesman in Kota Baru told Bernama that the evacuees were not able to return



Having fun: Children playing in the floodwaters at Kampung Kedai Lama yesterday.

home yet as their houses were still inundated.

He said those affected were from the Pasir Mas, Kota Baru and Tumpat districts where 22 relief centres remained in operation. Centres at Bachok, Pasir Puteh and Tanah Merah had all been closed.

Six stretches of roads are still closed to light vehicles in Pasir Mas. The water level of Sungai Golok had dropped to 10.12m in the evening, compared with 10.22m yesterday morning. It is still above the 9m danger level.

Kelantan Education Department director Hussain Awang said 22 schools involving 10,818 students would remain closed in the state because of the floods.

Of the number, 15 are in Pasir Mas, five in Tumpat and two in Gua Musang.

In **RANTAU PANJANG**, Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Dr Abdul Latiff Ahmad said his ministry had ordered the 800 armed forces personnel on border patrol duty to be mobilised to help Kelantan flood victims.

In Terengganu and Pahang, the situation has improved with evacuees starting to return home.

In **KUALA TERENGGANU**, a state National Security Council spokesman said only 116 people still remained at evacuation centres in Setiu (84), Kemaman (24) and Dungun (eight).

In **KUANTAN**, floodwaters have subsided with the last group of 18 evacuees allowed to return home yesterday.

He said the group included some 4,000 Chinese families who would be celebrating Chinese New Year next month.

More than 31,000 families fled their homes in Kedah due to floods that hit five districts for 10 days from Nov 1 last year.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has predicted strong winds and choppy seas off Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang until Wednesday.

It said north-easterly winds with speeds of between 50kph and 60kph and waves measuring up to 5.5m would hit waters off these states, posing a danger to beach activities, shipping, fishing and oil rigs.

Bad weather conditions* are also predicted for eastern Johor, parts of Sarawak, Labuan, Tioman and parts of Sabah.