



RISING CONCERN

A group of villagers monitoring the water level at the Bau barrage after several areas in Bau, Sarawak, were hit by floods yesterday. Floodwaters cut off several main roads in the district and the water level is rising in most of the low-lying areas in the gold mining town.

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500 move to centres as river levels rise



Residents of Kampung Siram in Pasir Mas, Kelantan, returning home after floodwaters had subsided in their village. — NST picture by Rosdan Wahid

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KUCHING: Some 500 people at low-lying areas here and in the Bau districts were evacuated yesterday following a rise in river levels because of continuous rain over the past few days.

Residents from Batu Kawa, Siniawan, Belimbing, Tondong and Sibulung in the Bau district were moved to four centres as of 4pm yesterday.

An alert was issued on the moderate to heavy rains that might continue over here and Bau districts, forecast to last until Friday.

Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr George Chan Hong Nam said the weather conditions could cause

floods along riverines and at low-lying areas.

"The amount of rain recorded yesterday here and in the Bau districts was high," he said after visiting the Kuching Barage yesterday.

As of 12 noon yesterday, the amount of rain recorded here was 279mm and 300mm in Bau, all within nine hours of rainfall.

Chan, who is state disaster and relief management committee chairman, said the normal amount of rain was usually 600mm per month.

"The rain clouds over the two districts is not moving away and that is why we have heavy rain.

"We forecast less rain after Sunday, but the wet weather is expected to continue until Chinese New Year."

Chan urged the Welfare Department to distribute food and bottled water as soon as possible instead of taking down details of the flood victims.

"This is an emergency. Just distribute the food, water and medical aid at the evacuation centre. Paperwork can be done later."

In Kelantan, floods were confined in the Tumpat district where 1,439 evacuees are still at the three relief centres.

All the evacuees in Pas Mas have been allowed to return home and the five relief centres in the district had been closed, said a spokesman from the flood operations room.

At the height of the third wave of floods in the state over the past week, 3,441 people were evacuated to 27 relief centres in six districts,

namely Tanah Merah, Kota Baru, Pasir Mas, Tumpat, Pasir Puteh and Bachok.

"The only evacuees are from the Tumpat district with three centres still operating. They are SK Pengkalan Kubur 2 with 555 people, 2,591 at SK Pengkalan Kubur 1 and 293 at SK Geting."

The spokesman also said only one stretch of road in Pasir Mas at Km6 and Km9 between Kg Jambu and Meranti was still closed to light vehicles.

Water level at the Golok river in Rantau Panjang had dropped to 9.14m, but still above the danger level at 9m.

Eight schools — two in Rantau Panjang, four in Tumpat and two in Gua Musang were still closed involving 2,175 students.