

Floods claim 2 lives



Flood victims using a tractor to get to a relief centre in Kampung Tasek in Setiu, Terengganu, yesterday. Pic by Aswadi Alias

RIISING DANGER: Deputy prime minister calls for more frequent updates on television and radio

**NIK IMRAN ABDULLAH
AND SATIMAN JAMIN**

BACHOK
news@nst.com.my

FLOODS claimed two lives in Kelantan yesterday. A student also went missing in a canal near the Lemal railway station in Pasir Mas.

In Setiu, a district in Terengganu, evacuation centres recorded the highest

number of evacuees at 1,253.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, on a visit to Kelantan, had asked radio and television stations to broadcast more frequent updates on the flood situation.

"I have informed (Information, Communications and Culture Minister) Datuk (Seri) Rais (Yatim) for the flood updates to be spread widely and as frequently as possible," said Muhyiddin, who is National Disaster Management

→ Turn to **Page 12**

Helping exam candidates

1,789 evacuees placed in centres

→ From Page 1

Committee chairman, after attending a gathering at SK Machang 2, here, yesterday.

Earlier this month, Muhyiddin had announced that a total 5,156 evacuation centres had been listed to accommodate some 1.4 million flood victims nationwide.

Yesterday, he said the National Security Council had set up a website with information on the floods.

Heavy rainfall in Kelantan and Terengganu over the past few days had caused rivers to swell.

Yesterday, the first two victims were identified as Ahmad Fathi Ashraff Roslan, 14, and his 10-year-old brother, Mohamad Arif Hukmi.

In Pasir Mas, the missing student was identified as Ali Amar, a 14-year-old from the Pondok Tal Tujuh religious school.

In Terengganu, the floods have so far been confined to Setiu, Besut and Hulu Terengganu.

At presstime, 1,789 people — almost six times the number of Tuesday's evacuees — had been moved to 29 evacuation centres in the state.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Said visited the flood-hit districts after chairing the state exco meeting yesterday.

Heavy rains had caused Sungai Setiu to swell to 9.13m — 0.3 metres above danger level, according to readings taken at the Permaisuri bridge. A mosque there became the biggest evacuation centre, with 328 people from 33 families from the surrounding villages.

The Besut river rose to 20.53m, about 1.3m above the danger level.

However, evacuees dropped from 560 at noon to 431 people as floodwaters subsided in some areas.

The flood had also eased in Hulu Terengganu, with the number of people at evacuation centres in Kuala Kejir and Kampung Pengkalang Ajal down from 175 at noon yesterday to 105 at 5pm.

In Kuantan, M. Hamzah Jamaludin reports that continuous rains had caused flash floods in the town area, while the waters at Sungai Belat, Sungai Lembing and Sungai Kuantan here and Sungai Triang in Bera have breached the danger level.

The stretch at Km12 of Jalan Karak-Telemong in Bentong was also closed to light vehicles yesterday morning. Five people from two families from the nearby Kampung Sungai Pertak were evacuated when floodwaters rose to 0.5m.

However, the evacuees were allowed to return home and the road was reopened to traffic about 1pm yesterday.

CONTINGENCY PLAN:
SPM and STPM candidates in flood-hit areas to stay in school hostels

**A. AZIM IDRIS
AND ZARINA ABDULLAH**
KUALA TERENGGANU
news@nst.com.my



Even with the waters rising above 9 metres yesterday, many are still crossing Sungai Golok through Pangkalan Hassan Merah in Kelantan. Pic by Fathil Asri

THE Terengganu Education Department will place Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) candidates at their respective school dormitories if their villages are hit by floods.

The department will also arrange for transportation to ferry students who are cut off from their schools due to submerged roads.

State Education, Higher Learning, Science and Human Resource committee chairman Ahmad Razif Abdul Rahman said the department was working with several others such as the Fire and Rescue Department, Civil Defence Department and the police to mount "Ops Payung" to ensure all students could sit for their exams.

Razif said special briefings had been held with the departments involved to discuss the eventuality of aiding students to reach examination halls if their areas were flooded.

There were no reports of schools being inundated so far, he added.

However, some students from low-lying areas in the state had already been moved to their school dormitories so that they could focus on their exams.

"The department will arrange for alternative accommodation if the schools do not have dormitories," he

said, adding that the department will bear rental costs and others expenses.

State National Security Council (NSC) secretary Tajul Ariffin Muhammad said the evacuation of all flood victims to relief centres throughout the affected areas in

Terengganu ran smoothly with no untoward incidents.

He said the council would not resort to any further contingency plans as it had already made preparations to face the floods.

"Most evacuees came to the centres on their own but some had to be

aided by enforcement personnel.

"We assure victims that food supplies for the relief centres are enough," he told the *New Straits Times*.

He also praised the evacuees for taking heed of flood warnings which were crucial in averting casualties.

Less rainfall expected this weekend

KUALA LUMPUR: Rainfall in the northern part of Malaysia is expected to decrease this weekend.

The predicted drop in rainfall comes as a short reprieve after the Meteorological Department issued a yellow stage warning last Friday to notify residents in certain states of heavy rainfall that may lead to flooding in low-lying areas from Nov 21 to 24.

A department spokesman said heavy rainfall was expected to last until tonight, following which Kedah, Perlis, Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu could expect less rain this Saturday, barring any sudden weather changes.

Strong north-easterly winds at 40 to 50kph and waves of up to 3.5m in the waters off Langkawi, Perlis,

northern Kedah, Pahang and eastern Johor Timur, were expected until Tuesday.

The spokesman added that Kuala Lumpur was expected to receive between 20 and 40 per cent more rainfall than its long-term means for the period due to the presence of a weak to moderate La Nina in the equatorial central Pacific Ocean this month.

The total rainfall in the Subang area this week was notably more than a similar period last year, with an increase of 76mm, he said.

The rainfall amount was predicted to remain the same in Selangor and Federal Territories, while Kelantan, Pahang, Johor, Sabah and Sarawak would most likely experience more rain next month.

Less rainfall is expected in Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak, Terengganu, Malacca and Negeri Sembilan next month. As of yesterday, statistics from the National Security Council showed the number of flood victims stood at 1,689 from 403 families.

Overall, 1,296 people were affected by floods in Terengganu, 314 in Kelantan, 50 in Malacca and the rest in Johor.

Flooded areas included Kota Baru and Pasir Putih in Kelantan, Setiu, Besut and Hulu Terengganu in Terengganu, Batu Pahat in Johor and Jasin in Malacca, with 24 flood relief centres being utilised.

In Terengganu, 11 roads have been closed, and one in Pahang.

Malaysian Red Crescent (MRC) Kelantan branch honorary-secre-

tary Abdul Aziz Abdul Rahman said the organisation had already sent eight Clinton cookers, including a stand, burners, huge stainless steel pots and trays, to six flood relief centres. Aziz said 50 members had been cooking three meals a day for the victims and helping out around the clock.

"If the situation gets worse, we can mobilise about 300 members to help the victims alongside the Welfare Department personnel. Last year, we mobilised about 100 members."

MRC Terengganu branch honorary secretary Mohamad Mohd Zain said the branch lacked manpower as it only had members in Kuala Terengganu and Dungun.

However, he said, 90 members would be deployed if the need arose.