

Some cheer despite forecast of deluge

UNDER CONTROL: Impact from floods this year 'manageable'

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WHILE the current flooding in parts of the country looked unusually severe, the impact is likely to be at a manageable level.

National Security Council (NSC) secretary Datuk Mohamed Thajudeen Abdul Wahab said compared with previous years, the floods this year were less severe.

Thajudeen said that the council had anticipated that the country might experience the worst floods this year due to torrential rain and big flash floods which hit the neighbouring countries of late.

"It is a big relief as what happened is manageable.

"Although some infrastructure have been damaged and a lot of roads were under water, the situation is still under control."

He said the council's prediction of floods was based on weather forecasts, which included measurements, data collection, data-information transmission, report writing and dissemination of information.

Thajudeen said Kelantan and Terengganu were the worst-hit states so far.

The council, he said, obtained information on the floods from its officers at state and district levels. "We always monitor the situation and will not hesitate to go down to see for ourselves the situation on the ground," he added.

In **Kuching**, continuous rain since Sunday has left several areas throughout Sarawak inundated, with the worst being Balingian, here and Samarahan division where water rose nearly two meters high.

A spokesman from the State Flood Operations department said 4,638 people were relocated to higher ground.

In **Samarahan**, some 4,000 people from Kampung Sarpan Ulu, Kampung Asajaya Ulu and the surrounding areas were relocated to



Bad weather ruined Christmas plans for Sujie Abang, 51, from Moyan Lidan, Asajaya, who has to move around in a makeshift boat. Pic by Nadim Bokhari



As at 5pm yesterday, 430 people were still seeking shelter at Sekolah Kebangsaan Pianggu, Tanjung Gemuk, Rompin, due to floods on Sunday night in several low-lying villages. Pic by Afif Abd Halim

Kompleks Sukan Asajaya, Sekolah Kebangsaan Hj Kelali and the nearby surau, in the area.

Several low-lying areas in Kuching were also affected, namely Kampung Beradik, Kampung Tengah Sungai and Semariang Batu.

In **Balingian**, 378 people from five longhouses were placed in Sekolah Kebangsaan Sg Arip.

The five longhouses — Rumah Janting, Kusau, Mujah, Gansau and Sibat — were considered unsafe for now.

The spokesman also said two rows of shophouses and Klinik Sungai Arip were also not spared from the floods.

Two landslides were also report-

ed along the Tatau-Bintulu road, cutting off the main route in the area. However, no casualties were reported.

Rainfall over Sarawak was at an all-time high at 207mm over the past 24 hours.

A Meteorological Department spokesman said the high rainfall was more than what was estimated for this monsoon.

In **Rompin**, despite heavy rain yesterday, the number of evacuees dropped to 625 compared with 946 victims in the morning.

A spokesman of the State police operations room said that 321 victims were allowed to return home after two flood evacuation centres

— the Rompin District council hall and Kampung Rekoh multipurpose hall — were closed.

The second wave of floods late on Sunday night inundated several low-lying areas forcing the villagers to be evacuated to five flood relief centres before some were allowed to return home in stages yesterday.

At 5pm yesterday, 137 people were seeking shelter at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sarang Tiong, 430 at SK Pianggu and 58 victims were housed at Dewan Teluk Gading.

Tioman assemblyman Datuk Mohd Johari Hussin said the villagers were moved to the relief centres on Sunday after their

homes were under 1m to 1.5m of water.

"Several villages experienced flash floods but the situation improved yesterday morning.

"We will continue to monitor the situation and will be prepared if the water level rises again." **Additional reporting by T.N. Alagesh**

Page 1 pic: It was a wet Christmas for villagers of **Kampung Moyan Lidan, Asajaya**, as their homes were under **0.5m of water** after heavy rain. Some 5,000 residents of Asajaya and Sadong Jaya near Kuching had to be evacuated to four flood relief centres yesterday. **Pic by Nadim Bokhari**