

Situation improves in flood-hit states

GOING HOME: Worst-hit Sarawak sees highest reduction in number of evacuees

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THE flood situation in the country took a turn for the better yesterday, with many evacuees returning home.

The number of evacuees in worst-hit Sarawak, which stood at 2,657 on Wednesday, dropped to 562 yesterday.

Sarawak Drainage and Irrigation Department director Wong Siu Hieng said floodwaters were expected to fully subside by tomorrow.

"The condition in Kuching is back to normal, only the coastal areas are still affected.

"It will take a couple of days for the coastal area to clear, provided there are no more downpours."

Wong said Sarawak saw the highest recorded rainfall at 610mm in 24 hours on Christmas day which was the cause of the flood.

According to the National Security Council's website, the relief centre in Samarahan had 451 victims, a huge drop from 1,407 yesterday.

This was followed by Sri Aman (102) and Sarikei with nine evacuees.

In Johor, the numbers dropped to 251 victims from 715 yesterday, all of whom were housed in six relief centres in Segamat.

Mersing and Batu Pahat had closed down their evacuation centres as the situation improved with all evacuees returning home.

The situation in Pahang remained the same as the number of

victims still stood at 15, all in [Kampung Gadak.

In Sabah, there were no flood evacuees as all 101 families had returned home.

The evacuation centre at Sandakan was closed at 11am yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Meteorological Department has forecast intermittent rain, occasionally moderate, occurring over states of Johor (Kota Tinggi and Mersing districts), Pahang (Rompin, Pekan and Kuantan districts) and Terengganu (Hulu Terengganu, Marang, Dungun and Kemaman districts) to continue till today (Friday).

The department added that the rainfall may cause floods over low-lying areas.

Strong Northeasterly winds over 60 kmph with waves more than 5.5 metres were expected to occur and continue till next Thursday, over the waters of Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, East Johor, Samui, Tioman, Bunguran, Condore, Reef North and Layang-Layang.

The third category warning meant it was dangerous for all coastal and shipping activities, including workers on oil platforms.

In addition, the coastal areas of East Coast of the Peninsular are vulnerable to sea level rise.

This condition is expected to continue until Monday.

Places such as Sarawak, Labuan and Sabah (West Coast, Interior and Kudat) were expecting winds between 50 and 60kmph with waves up to 4.5 metres till next Thursday.