



EAST COAST HIT BY FLOODS

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Pic by Afif Abdul Halim

3,000 flee as floods hit 4 states

WET XMAS: East coast states and Johor bear brunt as more rain forecast

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ALMOST 3,000 people have been displaced in four states as a result of floods following continuous rain in several parts of the country over the weekend. All three east coast states — Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang — and Johor were effected.

In **Pahang**, heavy rain since Sunday night resulted in flash floods

in Kuantan, Pekan and Rompin, with 915 people evacuated as at 10.30pm yesterday.

The flash floods wreaked havoc in Kuantan, with hundreds of motorists trapped in massive traffic jams after many roads were inundated.

The operations centres at the district police, Civil Defence Department and Fire and Rescue Department were also besieged with frantic calls by those who were trapped in cars and homes since 8am.

Dozens of cars parked at the basement of a hotel and shopping complex in Kuantan were also damaged when they were submerged by floodwaters.

Tengku Mahkota of Pahang Tengku Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, who visited victims at SK Galing, advised the authorities to check the drainage and irrigation

system which could be the main reason for the flash floods.

Although the water in Kuantan had subsided about 5pm, a district police flood operations centre spokesman advised the public to be on alert as the downpour did not stop in several areas, including Sungai Lembing.

At 6pm, only the stretch of road at the Sungai Caru bridge near Sungai Lembing was still closed to light vehicles, while seven other stretches were open to all traffic.

In **Terengganu**, the flood situation worsened as 1,301 people were evacuated to relief centres, compared with 144 on Sunday.

The affected areas were Besut, Dungun, Kuala Terengganu, Hulu Terengganu and Marang.

In **Kelantan**, several low-lying areas were inundated, forcing 857 people to be evacuated. The af-

fected districts were Kuala Krai, Machang, Pasir Mas, Pasir Putih and Kota Baru.

In **Johor**, 16 people were evacuated to a relief centre in Batu Pahat.

Meanwhile, the National Security Council said it had drawn up flood management plans for the affected areas and would implement them with the help of other agencies.

Its secretary, Datuk Mohamed Thajudeen Abdul Wahab, said yesterday that the floods plaguing the east coast were under control, with relevant agencies on standby to assist with rescue efforts.

Thajudeen said the Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (SMART) as well as the civil defence and armed forces were already on the ground and ready to mobilise if the situation became more serious.

The Meteorological Department's website revealed that heavy rains were expected to continue throughout the country in the coming days.

The wet spell in the east coast is similar to last year's wet Christmas when Pahang, Johor, Kelantan and Terengganu were hit by massive floods. **Additional reporting by Ashraf Hafizudin**

Page 1 pic: Flood-hit Kuantan at a standstill after five hours of non-stop rain that left many, including motorists, stranded.

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A Drainage and Irrigation Department worker checking on a water pump near Universiti Malaysia Kelantan in Kota Baru, Kelantan, yesterday. Some 2,000 students and staff of the university were affected by the flash floods that hit the area. **Bernama pic**



Flood victims at Sekolah Kebangsaan Alur Lek Kampung Kasar, Setiu, relief centre in Kuala Terengganu queuing up to have their meal yesterday. **Pic by Yusmaizi Karim**