



To safe ground: Patients being evacuated from Sultanah Nur Zahirah Hospital in Kuala Terengganu.
- ZABIDI TUSIN / The Star

 Places likely to be hit by tropical storm



Bracing for a storm

Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang are readying for a tropical storm as the tail of typhoon Sonamu heads for coastal areas in the three states, threatening floods. Although the Meteorological Department says the storm may lose power as it reaches our waters, the authorities are preparing for the worst. **>See Page 6 for reports**

East coast on high alert

Three states brace for tropical storm and another round of floods



Safety measures:
Contractor workers completing the wave breaker wall at Sura beach in Terengganu. (Inset) Local fishermen chatting by the beach as they were told not to go out to sea.



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PETALING JAYA: Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang have been placed on high alert for a tropical storm which is expected to make landfall today and cause flooding in the coastal areas.

The storm is the effect of typhoon Sonamu which struck the Philippines on Friday.

The Meteorological Department advised people in the affected areas to heed the instructions of the local authorities although it believed that the storm would be downgraded to a slower and less powerful "tropical depression" before it hits the east coast states.

Department deputy director-general Alui Bahari said: "As it gets closer to land, a tropical storm usually loses its speed and moisture."

"At the moment, it is still a tropical storm. By the time it reaches our waters, it is likely that it will be a tropical depression, which is less severe."

On how a storm gathers, Alui said: "First you have a low pressure area which gains strength to become a tropical depression, tropical storm and severe tropical storm before it becomes a typhoon."

The worst tropical storms to hit Malaysia were Greg which claimed

more than 200 lives in Sabah in 1996 and Vamei which caused five deaths in Johor in 2011.

The three east coast states meanwhile are taking no chances and preparing for a worst-case scenario.

Kelantan National Security Council secretary Mohamad Rosle Mamat said all agencies related to search and rescue had been put on standby.

No residents have been evacuated, but area security committees are on hand to tell them if the situation turns bad and they need to move out, he said.

He also said the Pasir Puteh and

Tumpat district health departments had been reminded to evacuate patients from hospitals close to the coast.

Meanwhile, Pahang State Secretary Datuk Seri Muhammad Safian Ismail said all district officers had been instructed to inform village heads and security committees to prepare for the floods.

People living in the coastal areas of Terengganu have been told to evacuate while government departments there have moved out their personnel.

Fishermen have been told not to go out to sea.