

Villagers in 'flood mode'

Former victims well-prepared with dry storage and escape plans

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JOHOR BARU: After being affected by floods as many as five times a year, residents in Kampung Laut, Skudai are so used to it that they have their own emergency protocol on what to do when it starts to rain heavily.

Housewife K. Citra, 30, said she has clothes and important documents packed in a backpack and stored on top of her cupboard.

"When it starts to rain heavily, I will start moving household items onto shelves and higher ground and I will just grab the bag and relocate to the nearest flood relief centre for shelter," she said when met at her home here.

She added that her home along Jalan Balau 4 in Kampung Laut was flooded up to knee level after just two hours of rain on Saturday.

"I quickly went through the routine and grabbed my emergency bag before rushing to the centre with my 20-year-old son," she said.

Another flood victim, Zailan Abdul Kadir, 55, who has been staying in the area for more than three dec-



Safety measure: Zailan inspecting her appliances stored in the concrete shelter built by her husband in Kampung Laut.

ades, said her husband built a RM7,000 concrete shelter on higher ground in front of their house to store electrical items when it floods.

"We built the shelter 10 years ago after having our things washed away and damaged by water so many times. When it rains heavily for more than a couple of hours, my sons will start moving larger items like refrigerators, the TV set and washing machines to the shelter.

"My family has gotten used to the routine of moving things around and relocating whenever it floods," she said, adding that she never thought about moving because the house belonged to her husband's family.

Johor Welfare Department director Khadijah Abdullah said two out of five relief centres in the state had closed with 840 victims still staying at three relief centres in Kota Tinggi

as of 1pm yesterday.

Checks with the Meteorological Services Department website showed that there would be thunderstorms and heavy rain throughout the whole of this week that might result in strong winds and flash floods over low-lying areas.

Residents, especially in Mersing, Segamat, Ledang, Muar, Batu Pahat, Kluang and Pontian districts, have been reminded to be on alert.