



The victims: Mohd Noreen Zainal, Mohd Hafizuddin Kamal, Mohd Nazrul Amiruddin Zambri, Mohd Zikri Zaidi, Mohd Zaki Zaidi, Mohd Izoan Hakimi Amin, Mohd Syafiq Md Syukur, Mohd Hafizul Danial Norhashim.

Fatal rescue

Eight teenage friends, inseparable in life, died together in a tragic incident near their homes in Segamat, Johor. One of the boys fell into a treacherous stretch of Sungai Muar. The others, who jumped in to save him, also lost their lives. > See reports by **MOHD FARHAAN SHAH** on Pages 2 and 3



Sad sight

Relatives of the victims (above) breaking down in tears as villagers gather around the banks of the river near Buloh Kasap where the tragedy occurred.



Deadly 'deep hole' in the river, claims man

Cabinet to discuss water crisis >6

Netizens rally to save daycare centre >10

Sand extracting activities caused change to river bed

SEGAMAT: The area where eight boys were believed to have drowned along the Muar River is not far from a favourite recreational spot called Pasir Rusa.

The recreational area, which is almost next to the Buloh Kasap town centre, about 8km from here, is well kept and has an eatery.

It is also where people living in the area bring their children for picnics or for some fresh air as the river running alongside is not very deep.

The river in the area also has a sloping bank where visitors sometimes take a dip.

However, at the spot where the boys drowned, about 50m from the recreational park, the water is very deep and the riverbank falls sharply without any slope.

Locals believe that sand extracting activity in the area had created an area where the river bed is much deeper compared to other parts of the river.

A man, who was at the scene during the search and rescue mission, claimed the sand extracting activity had created a "deep hole" in the river.



Grim search: Fire and Rescue Department divers searching for the bodies of the teenagers in the Buloh Kasap River after the teens went to the aid of one who was struggling in the water.

> For updates, see *The Star Online*