

NEWS

Fish farmers relocate to save their business

DRY SPELL: Patin breeders shift cages to deeper parts of Sungai Pahang

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THE dry season and sand dredging activities at Sungai Pahang have forced some patin breeders, especially from

Kampung Tengah, to relocate some of their cages to other areas.

The breeders, who have yet to fully recover from losses after a massive flood in December, were left with no choice but to shift some of their cages to the deeper parts of Sungai Pahang to survive.

Azha Abd Malik, 41, was among 200 patin breeders who had shifted 38 of his 64 cages to Kampung Pangsenam about 4km away.

"The water level of Kampung Pangsenam river bank is deeper than my current place," he said.

Azha, who started rearing fish 12 years ago, said he had to shift some

of the cages as the water was only knee-deep.

"A few days after I relocated the cages, the remaining 26 cages were stranded on sandbars as the water level dropped drastically.

"Now, I really do not know what will happen next because we have

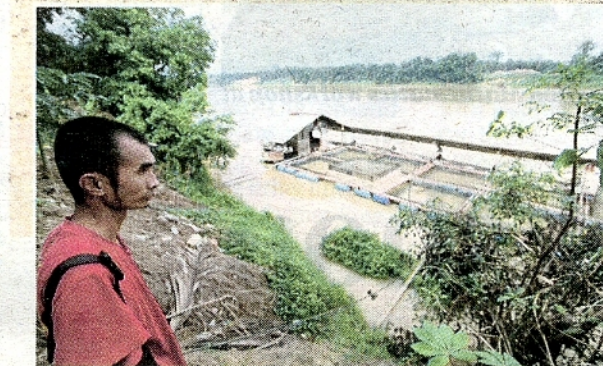
just started rebuilding our lives from scratch," he said, adding his loss due to the flood was RM300,000.

He said during this dry spell and murky water condition, many fry could not survive.

"From the 800 fry that we released from every cage, only 500 survive.

"Although they survive, only a few weigh more than 1kg," he said, adding that patin was currently priced at RM17 per kg.

Azha said he could not rear tilapia and *baung* like he used to, as the two could easily die with the current water level and temperature.



The water level at **Sungai Pahang** has been **dropping drastically** due to the **dry season and dredging**. (Inset) **Azha Abd Malik** has had to **shift 38 of his 64 cages** to Kampung Pangsenam, about 4km away. Pix by Luqman Hakim Zubir

