

Takong Lake slowly coming back to life

GERIK: Slowly but surely, water is pooling again in Takong Lake, much to the relief of Pengkalan Hulu folks.

A stream feeding the lake, which locals call Sungai Selarong, is holding up against the drought with a small but constant flow to refill the lake.

"I have lived here all my life and the stream has never dried up," said civil servant Ahmad Asri Ismail, 35, who lives in Kampung Selarong.

On April 16, *The Star* highlighted the lake on its front page as among the first in the country to bear the brunt of El Nino.

After the lake shrank, the local authority further drained it and held a rarely done community fishing event called Pesta Gagau.

A check yesterday showed that water was starting to stream into the lake again.

Pengkalan Hulu district secretary Mohd Shah Nizam Abdul Aziz said the district council had also released the remaining water to repair a broken monsoon drain that lowered the lake's level during the rainy season.

"El Nino does play a role. But it did not suddenly dry up. We are now upgrading the monsoon drain at a cost of RM190,000," he said yesterday.