

'Fewer rainstorms in coming days'

KUALA LUMPUR: Heavy rain, which lashed Penang and Kedah the last few days, leading to flash floods, is due to the northwesterly wind from the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Wilfred Madius Tangau said the wind, which brings moisture from both the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, has caused Malaysia, especially the northern part of the peninsula, to experience wet weather conditions.

"Perlis, Penang, Kedah and northern Perak will experience wet weather conditions, but the rain will gradually become less starting from today (yesterday)," he told the *New Straits Times* yesterday.

"After today, rain is still expected to occur in several places, especially in the late afternoon and early evening, but the intensity is expected to decrease," he added.

Madius said such continuous heavy rain in Penang and Kedah would not likely occur elsewhere, other than the places mentioned above.

"The wet weather conditions throughout the country are expected to ease, but isolated rain and thunderstorm in the late afternoon and early evening are still expected to occur throughout the country."

Penang Meteorological Office in Bayan Lepas recorded 131mm (66 per cent) in rainfall on July 18 compared with 199mm of the mean monthly rainfall for this month.

It was reported on Monday that several parts in Penang and Kedah were brought to a standstill due to heavy rain on Monday, which caused low-lying areas to be inundated with knee-deep water.

As of Tuesday, a total 474 people in three districts had been evacuated in Kedah, while the situation in Penang was under control as most villagers had returned to their homes from the flood relief centres.

In **Alor Star**, 385 people are still staying at the five flood relief centres in the state.

Ninety-one of them are staying at the flood relief centre in Pendang, while 294 people are staying at four relief centres in Yan.

Seven flood relief centres, four in Kuala Muda and three in Baling, were closed yesterday.

Kedah Civil Defence Department Disaster Operation officer Major Imran Azemi said relief centres that were open were Surau Teroi Bukit, Surau Kampung Sungai Lintang, Surau Kampung Batu 22 and Surau Kampung Sungai Malai in Yan and Dewan Cenderawasih in Ayer Putih, Pendang.