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| <i>Tajuk</i> | : | 33,000 in shelters: Flood situation 'very bad' in Kedah, 'precarious' in Perlis |
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33,000 in shelters: Flood situation ‘very bad’ in Kedah, ‘precarious’ in Perlis

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ALOR STAR: The floods in Kedah claimed the lives of two young sisters yesterday, bringing the total number of fatalities in the state to four since Monday.

The situation in Perlis is still precarious with two-thirds of the state inundated by floodwaters, while in Kelantan it is easing up.

To date, however, more than 33,000 victims are being housed in relief centres in the three states.

The two latest victims — Siti Nadia Syukur, 13, and Sharipah, 8 — were believed to have drowned after they fell off a motorcycle, ridden by a neighbour, into an irrigation canal in Kampung Telaga Emas, Langgar in Pokok Sena about noon.

The neighbour, Intan Malik, 14, also fell into the canal but she held on to a tree and was saved by villagers.

The two earlier victims were identified as a 64-year-old German woman, Erna Fischer, who drowned in Kampung Kota Giam near Jitra on Monday night and schoolboy, Mohd Zaki Shaari, 13, who fell into a pond in Kampung Charok Bongor on Tuesday.

Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak said the number of evacuees in Kedah and Perlis was rising.

This was despite clear skies over the past two days and the Meteorological Department lifting the red alert status for the states in both states on Tuesday.

Azizan said residents in Kedah, especially in low-lying areas, should brace for the worst.

He said the “very bad” situation in Kedah — in the districts of Kubang Pasu, Padang Terap, Kota Setar and Pokok Sena — was compounded by high sea tides.

But he expressed relief that Federal and state government agencies, as well as non-governmental organisations, had been quick in providing relief to the victims.

“The state government has approved a RM300,000 allocation for flood relief efforts.”

Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Md Isa Sabu said about two-thirds of the state were still remained under water, including several relief centres.

“The floods are worse than in 2005,” he said, adding that five years ago, only 19,000 victims were evacuated in both states.

The floods this time had caused the closure of the North-South Express way in Changlun, Kedah, since Monday.

Power and water supplies to four districts were also disrupted with Kota Setar being the hardest hit.

Offices and eateries, especially food stalls in both states, have yet to resume business since Monday.

Bottled water is also quickly running out of stock at most supermarkets and hypermarkets.

The Sultan Abdul Halim Airport near here had been closed since Tuesday when the runway was inundated.

At press time, Kubang Pasu recorded the highest number of evacuees at 15,275; Padang Terap at 3,993; Kota Setar at 4,543; and Pokok Sena at 823.

Fifty-five schools have been closed in Kedah, Perlis and Kelantan