

RECURRING NIGHTMARE

BALING FLOODS SEE 300 VILLAGERS EVACUATED

One victim says she no longer feels safe in area, believe it is time to relocate

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CONTINUOUS rainfall since Thursday has forced 300 residents from nine villages in the Kupang sub-district to be relocated when floodwater entered their homes.

For the 75 flood-hit families, the latest episode was like a recurring nightmare.

Flood victim Che Putih Ahmad,

54, said she had had enough and wanted to move out.

"We don't want to live here anymore. It's better for us to move out," she said, adding that the floodwater overflowed quickly after more than three hours of heavy rain on Thursday.

She said floodwater reached a metre high at her home, forcing her family to evacuate.

Azizah Ahmad, 65, from Kampung Padang Empang, said she moved to the temporary evacuation centre (PPS) about 8pm

when water flooded her house up to the windows.

"The first incident recently was terrible enough. I don't want to go through that again," she said at the evacuation centre.

Azizah hoped the government could build new settlements, such as houses under Kedah Development Authority, for flood-hit residents.

"We don't feel safe living here any more. Whenever it rains heavily, I feel uneasy because of what happened before."

Kupang sub-district village head, Badrul Hisham Che Li, said the villages affected were Kampung Iboi, Lata Chelak, Padang

Empang, Masjid Iboi, Bendang Padang, Bendang Bechah, Jerai, H Angus and Bukit Hijau.

He said a PPS was opened to house 58 victims from 19 families badly hit by the floods.

The rest had relocated to their neighbours' houses, as the water level reached only 0.5m and receded an hour later.

He said the recently built bailey bridge had to be temporarily closed to traffic.

"Heavy rain continued for three hours and lasted until night, causing the bridge to be closed at 10pm," he said.

He added that due to the unpredictable weather, all victims

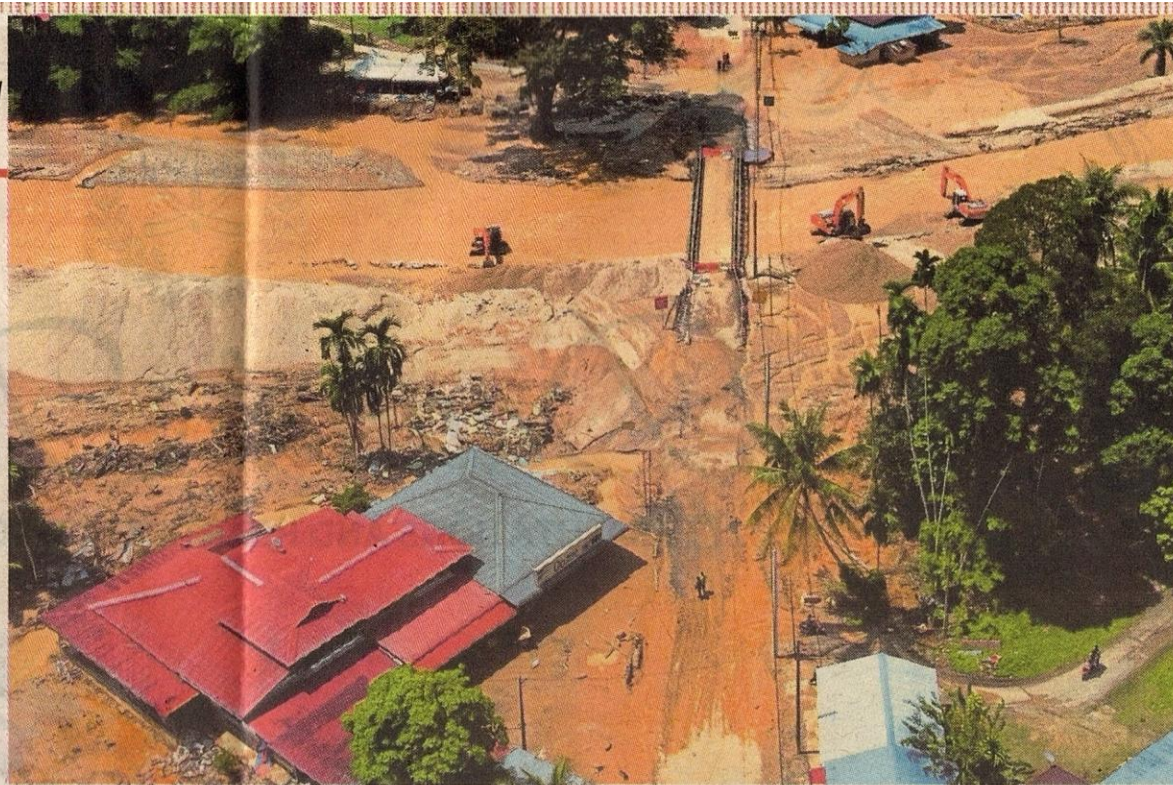
at the PPS were not allowed to return home yet.

Badrul said most houses were located 30m from the riverbank.

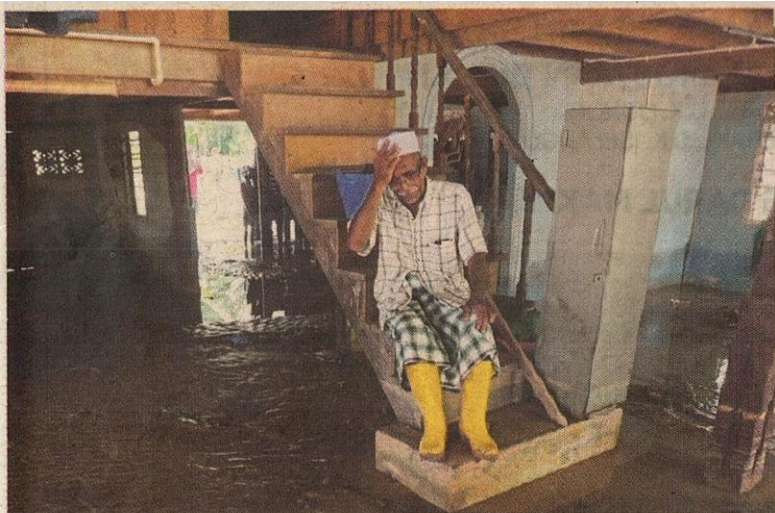
"When it rains continuously for more than two hours, the river quickly overflows," he said.

Baling Civil Defence Force deputy officer Lieutenant Dzulhaidy Mohd Khalil confirmed that the number of evacuees at the PPS in Kupang increased to 58 yesterday morning.

Page 1 pic: Floodwater inundating an area surrounding a bailey bridge in Lata Celak, Kampung Iboi, Baling, yesterday.



A bird's eye view of Kampung Iboi, which is among several villages hit by floods, in Baling yesterday. PIX BY DANIAL SAAD



Flood victim Abdullah Ahmad ponders over his fate in his flood-hit home in Baling yesterday.



Flood victims gathering at a temporary relief shelter in Baling.

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