



KERATAN AKHBAR

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Higher fish prices due to northeast monsoon

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JOHOR BARU: The northeast monsoon has started to take a toll on the prices of fish.

Fish markets in Mersing and Batu Pahat have reported a decline in their haul with only a handful of larger boats going out to sea.

According to Batu Pahat fishermen association manager Ilyana Aris, the current price for ikan pelaling had gone up to RM13 per kilo compared to the usual RM10.

"The supply of ikan pelaling usually comes from the northern part of the peninsula, which is currently the most affected area by the northeast monsoon.

"Only a few boats dare go up north until Kedah to find fish, while the rest are mostly small-boat fishermen," she said.

As a temporary measure, Ilyana said fishermen started selling Q'Fish products - frozen fresh fish under the Q'Fish brand that was

introduced by the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM).

However, the public still prefers fresh fish due to the perception of usage of chemicals on frozen fish.

"It's the first thing that comes to the minds of people when they hear frozen fish. In reality, the fish is just frozen normally inside a freezer with no added preservatives," she said when contacted recently.

Meanwhile, Mersing fishermen association general manager Mohd Fazlan Abdullah revealed that the fish supply in the area had generally dropped since the monsoon season started.

"This is a normal situation each time during the monsoon season. The supply would drop and the price would increase generally about RM2 per kilo.

"The normal price for ikan cencaru is about RM7 per kilo, while ikan kembung is RM14 per kilo," he said.

Flood forces closure of airport

Lawas runway and complex inundated

By STEPHEN THEN
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MIRI: Lawas Airport has been shut down after its terminal building and airstrip were inundated by floods.

According to the Sarawak Disaster Relief Management Committee, the runway and airport complex were totally flooded following the non-stop rain on Wednesday night.

"Malaysia Airports Bhd has issued a notice on the closure of the airport.

"It will decide on how long, the airport will be shut down.

"As at 7am, the floodwaters have risen to two feet inside the complex and on the runway," the committee said in its update yesterday.

It added that the extent of damage would only be known once the flood subsides.

Lawas has a population of about 50,000 people. The airport is an important rural-link airport as it also serves the deep interior settlements of Bario and Ba'kelalan.

Besides the airport, four villages - Kpg



In deep water: A child wading through floodwaters in his house in Lawas. — Photo courtesy of the State Disaster Relief Committee

Siang Siang, Ulu Merapok, Kpg Luangan and Kpg Seberang - were also affected with some places inundated by nearly a metre of water.

Miri, Baram, Tinjar and Limbang are already hit by floods since early this week.

Situation improving in Kelantan but not Terengganu

KUALA LUMPUR: The flood situation in Kelantan is reported to be improving, while a slight increase in the number of evacuees is reported in Terengganu.

In Kelantan, the number of evacuees has dropped to 11,436 involving 4,442 families from 12,269 people (4,684 families) on Wednesday.

According to the Social Welfare Department's InfoBencana, 30 flood relief centres are still in operation in four districts, namely Pasir Mas with 8,117 evacuees (3,288 families), Tumpat (3,183 evacuees from 1,120 families), Pasir Puteh (80 evacuees from 15 families) and Kuala Krai (56 evacuees from 19 families).

The Kelantan government's ebanjir showed that the floodwaters in Sungai Golok at Rantau Panjang in Pasir Mas, and at Kuala Jambu, Tumpat, were still above the danger level.

The weather in the state was fine with no main roads closed due to the flood, which has so far claimed three lives, the latest being 51-year-old single father, Zulkapli Yaakub,

who was electrocuted while wading through floodwaters in Kampung Tasek Permai, Pasir Mas, on Wednesday.

In Terengganu, the number of flood victims at the eight relief centres increased to 1,047 people (269 families) from 899 people (235 families) recorded on Wednesday.

According to the Social Welfare Department's InfoBencana, 616 of the flood victims (161 families) are in Kuala Nerus, Setiu (37 people from eight families), and Kuala Terengganu (394 people from 100 families).

The weather in the state was also reported to be fine.

In Johor, the number of flood evacuees remained at 21 and they were being accommodated at a relief centre at Sekolah Agama Seri Comel in Parit Sulong, Batu Pahat.

State Local Government, Urban Well-being and Environment Committee chairman Tan Chen Choon said 16 of the evacuees were from Kampung Parit Betong while the other five evacuees were a family from Kampung Parit Abdul Rahman. — Bernama