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2ND WAVE

KELANTAN FLOODS LIKE A 'MINI TSUNAMI'

They were terrifying and came swiftly, say villagers

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It was like a mini tsunami. This was how almost 2,000 flood victims in Tanah Merah and Jeli described the second wave of floods that started yesterday.

The two districts were most affected by the floods, and among the villages hit were Kampung Rahmat, Kampung Legel, Kampung Sungai Satan, Kampung Gemang and Kampung Lakota, which were in 1m to 1.5m

of floodwaters.

Air Lanas village head Mat Zait Abdullah, 49, said the second round of floods was like a mini tsunami as it was terrifying and arrived swiftly.

"We did not expect this to happen to us as we thought that the flood would be a repeat of the previous wave. If the forecast stated that it would be bigger than the previous one, it never crossed our minds it would be so dangerous."

"The floodwaters came rapidly. At midnight on Tuesday, we were told that the floods were 5km from our villages, but within two hours, it had reached our homes."

The father of five, who's a farmer, said the mini tsunami swept away everything in front of it. It damaged not only houses

but other buildings as well as public facilities.

He didn't believe the flood was caused by heavy rainfall as it only started on Tuesday night.

"I suspect that development prevented the rain water from dispersing properly," he added.

Another victim, Esah Yunus, 65, said the second round of floods was similar to the 1967 flood, also known as *bah merah* (red flood).

"Everyone here experienced the 2014 flood, but not many were there in 1967. For me, this flood is like the 'bah merah' as it came fast. Villagers had no time to pack their belongings and other important documents."

"They thought only of saving themselves and their family members," said the mother of four, who is from Air Lanas.



Shop owner Abu Bakar Alwi (right) serving breakfast despite the floods in Kampung Dangar in Rantau Panjang yesterday. PIC BY NIK ABDULLAH NIK OMAR

Kelantan's flood situation improved as the number of evacuees dropped to 2,130 at 5pm yesterday, compared with 3,431 in the morning.

The victims from 657 families were housed in 24 relief centres in four districts: Tanah Merah, Machang, Jeli and Pasir Mas.

According to the Social Welfare Department Disaster Info Portal, although the number of victims had dropped in the state, the evacuees in Pasir Mas increased to 1,298 from 445 families in nine relief centres.

Pasir Mas recorded 500 victims from 121 families in 11 relief centres, while 278 people from 78 families were housed in three relief centres in Jeli. Machang's flood situation had

almost fully recovered, with 54 victims from 13 families housed in SRK Cina Pei Hwa.

Sungai Golok in Rantau Panjang was above the danger level, with a reading of 10.48m.

According to a report on the Department of Irrigation and Drainage's website, www.pulihintobanjir.water.gov.my, Sungai Golok in Jenob, which rose to the warning level yesterday morning, had reached the danger level of 21.87m, while Sungai Kelantan in Kusal was at the warning level with a 14.87m reading.

Sungai Galas in Dabong, Sungai Lebir in Tualang and Sungai Kelantan at Custom Jetty recorded water levels of 32.88m, 28.13m, and 30.04m, respectively.