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# Rainy season raises crop concerns

## Farmers fear heavy rain may cause floods in padi fields and destroy their livelihood

By IMRAN HILMI  
imran@thestar.com.my

**ALOR SETAR:** The wet spell may bring cheer to some but for farmers at Kampung Banggol Petai in Perang here, the rainy season could cost them a fortune.

Padi farmer Yusof Awang Kechik, 74, feared that crops might be destroyed before they could be harvested due to the monsoon season. He told *The Star* that he suffered more than RM10,000 in losses a few

years ago due to the prolonged wet season, which had caused his padi field to be inundated with water.

"The rain flooded the padi fields, destroying the crops which had yet to be harvested.

"It caused a lot of difficulties for me and many other farmers here.

"As for this year, although the monsoon has just begun, I am fearing the worst and worried about what we will face in the next few months," he said.

Yusof's friend Abdullah Bakar,

65, shared the same sentiment and expressed concern that the current wet spell could pose a gloomy future for farmers.

Besides torrential rain, he said they also had to cope with the poor flood mitigation system.

"The flood mitigation system is not good and is one of the factors contributing to our misery.

"If the padi fields are flooded for a few days and the crops are submerged, we can say goodbye to harvesting and start counting our

losses," he said.

Abdullah hoped that the relevant authority could step in to offer some assistance such as setting up a proper flood mitigation system in the area.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia), in a warning issued on Sunday, said thunderstorms, heavy rain and strong winds were expected in Perlis, Kedah, Perak, Kelantan, Terengganu, Sabah and Sarawak. According to MetMalaysia's

weather monitoring report from October 2019 to March 2020, most states in the peninsula are expected to receive an average rainfall of between 150mm and 350mm.

However, Perlis, Perak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are expected to receive above average rainfall levels of between 300mm and 420mm.

Kedah and Penang are expected to receive 350mm and 500mm of rainfall, which is even more than other states.

## Counsellors deployed to flood relief centres

**PETALING JAYA:** As many as 12 counsellors have been deployed to flood evacuation centres in Kuala Selangor to help flood victims cope with the disaster.

State Health, Welfare, Women Empowerment and Family executive councillor Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud said the counsellors would complement efforts by some NGOs that had worked to help children pass time at four evacuation centres there.

"Counsellors from the state Welfare Department will be deployed to the centres to attend to the needs of flood victims there.

"We also have NGO volunteers who have organised activities to help evacuees pass the time such as conducting religious classes for children, exercise sessions for women and even a course on massage techniques," she told pressmen during her visit to the evacuation centre at SK Parit Mahang.

She also said further preparations were being made to face future disaster waves. About 869 flood victims from 282 families had been moved to four



**Making the most of it:** Villager Yusof Surip collecting fish caught in a net that he placed outside his house following the flood in Kampung Parit Mahang. — Bernama

flood evacuation centres in Kuala Selangor as at 1pm yesterday. SK Parit Mahang housed the highest number of evacuees, with about 600 victims from 167 families

seeking shelter there.

Meanwhile, the evacuation centre in SK Jok, which was open on Monday, housed 72 victims from 49 families, while 150 victims from



50 families sought shelter at SK Pasangan.

The fourth evacuation centre at SK Jaya Setia housed 47 flood victims from 16 families.

## Number of Perak flood victims climbs

**IPOH:** The number of flood victims in Perak has increased to 642 residents from 162 families.

They are being housed in seven temporary relief centres (PPS). The number went up slightly from 617 from 157 families in four districts as at yesterday morning.

According to a State Fire and Rescue Department spokesman, the Hilir Perak district had the highest number of flood victims, with 351 from 91 families at three PPS.

"A total of 225 victims from 56 families are housed at PPS SK Changkat Jong, Teluk Intan Municipal Council, Langkap (83 victims, 21 families) and SK Dato Yahya Subban (43 victims, 14 families)," he said.

Meanwhile, the number of victims in two PPS in Kerian district remained at 188 from 48 families, namely at SK Changkat Lobak (149 victims, 35 families), while 39 victims from 13 families were at Parit Haji Aman Hall. — Bernama