

ROUGH WATERS

1 DEAD, 4 FEARED DROWNED IN SELANGOR

They were swept away by strong currents, say cops

MOHD HASBI SIDEK
AND KALBANA PERIMBANAYAGAM
SUNGAI BULOH
news@nst.com.my

A MAN was found dead and four others, including two women, feared drowned after they were swept away by strong currents while fishing near the Paya Jaras army camp yesterday.

It is learnt that seven anglers were initially swept away by currents in Sungai Gasi in the 5.30pm incident. Two, however, swam to safety.

Rescuers found the body of a man about 9.45pm, 7km away from where the victims had been when they were swept away.

It was initially reported that seven people had been swept away by strong currents, believed to be triggered by a flash flood, at 5.30pm as they were fishing at the river.

The authorities revised the figure to five.

District police chief Superintendent S. Somu said among the five were two women. Two men, who swam to safety, reported that their wives were among those who were swept away.

The victims were believed to be two women, aged 31 and 48, a 14-year-old, a 30-year-old Malaysian,



Fire and Rescue Department personnel searching for the victims at a river near the Paya Jaras army camp in Sungai Buloh yesterday.
PIC BY MAHZIR MAT ISA

and a 37-year-old Indonesian.

Police declined to reveal the identities of those missing, nor confirmed that of the body found.

"We are not ruling out the possibility that there are more victims as there were lone anglers in the area as well," said Somu.

He said search-and-rescue operations had been mounted by the Fire and Rescue Department, police, People's Volunteer Corps and soldiers since 6pm.

"There are 60 people involved in the operation. The search will continue throughout the night until the victims are found."

He said families whose loved ones were at the site and had yet to return home should lodge a report on their disappearance.

A Fire and Rescue Department spokesman said its personnel

were conducting a surface search for the victims, and had set up an operations centre 8km from where the victims were reported missing.

A local, Ahmad Nizam Abdul Kadir, said it was unusual for anglers to pick the spot as it was not known as a fishing hole.

"I was told that one of the residents here saw the victims being swept away by the waters, which were about 2.5m high," he said.

Another resident, Mohd Suhaimi Kamaruddin, 44, said it was not unusual for the river to suddenly increase in volume.

"Water from Kepong and Damansara converge into this river before flowing to Kuala Selangor and then the sea. No one fishes at this river because the water is unpredictable."