

Clear skies expected next week

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PETALING JAYA: Malaysians, who have been suffocating from the effects of the weeks-long haze, can expect to see clearer skies and cleaner air before the end of the week.

Malaysian Meteorological Department director-general Jailan Simon said the transition of the southwest monsoon to the northeast monsoon, which began today, would bring thunderstorms and rains across the country.

“There will be low-speed winds from various directions and that has the potential to cause thunderstorms,” he said in a statement today.

The transition marks the end of the southwest monsoon that began on May 6. The northeast monsoon will last until early November.

Jailan said short-term thunderstorms and heavy rain and strong winds are expected in the evenings and nights in the west coast and interior parts of the peninsular during this phase.

The same weather conditions are expected in the west coast of Sabah as well as the west coast and central parts of Sarawak.

The Department of Environment said there were seven hotspots in Sarawak – three in Sri Aman and four in Miri – as of yesterday.

According to a statement by the National Disaster Management Agency, peat fires continued to burn in several spots in Sarawak as of 7.45am yesterday.

Apart from the Fire Department and the Civil Defence Force, the army and other agencies have been engaged in the firefighting operations.

The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency also carried out water bombing operations in Sri Aman.

With the expected change in weather, cloud seeding operations have been halted, but will resume next week if the hazy conditions persist.

In the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, a total of 296 schools that were closed because of the haze will reopen today as the API in reading Batu Muda and Cheras not only dropped below 200 as of 5pm yesterday but continued to show a downward trend.