

MONSOON SEASON

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# Fishmongers forced to raise prices

**KUALA TERENGGANU:** The rainy season, coupled with tropical storm *Pabuk* that lashed the waters off this east coast state, has caused the price of fish to rise.

As a result, this has affected the business of fishmongers at Pasar Besar Kedai Payang (PBKP) here. A check at the well-known wet market saw a slow day at the 20 fish stalls, whose products were hardly picked up.

Asri Zakaria, 50, from Kampung Seberang Takir, said the monsoon, which started in November, had affected fish

prices in the state.

“As a trader, we look forward to support from customers, so the issue of the price of fish being deliberately raised to take advantage of the weather does not arise.

“Traders do not arbitrarily raise their prices because they know it will eventually hurt them. The price of fish depends on the market which, in turn, is based on fisherman selling it to us.

“We only make a profit of between 50 sen and RM1 per kilogramme and it’s not right for us to take advantage of our cus-



**Mustafa Abu Bakar**



**Asri Zakaria (right) choosing fish for a customer at Pasar Besar Kedai Payang in Kuala Terengganu yesterday. PIX BY IMRAN MAKHZAN**

tomers,” he said at the market.

Asri said not all customers understood the fish price situation during the monsoon season, and he had to explain the increase in fish price.

“The most frequent request is for mackerel, but the fish is now priced between RM18 and RM20 per kg compared with the regular price of around RM14 per kg.

“If *ikan merah* is wanted, then there is an increase to RM32 per kg compared with RM30 per kg at the end of last year. However, it is at the dealer’s discretion, and some are still sold at RM30 per kg,” he said.

Mustafa Abu Bakar, 60, from Kampung Gong Badak, said the supply of fresh fish had also decreased as many fishermen could

not go to sea.

“Traders are forced to utilise existing supplies, as well as frozen fish to sell to customers during the monsoon.

“It’s up to customers whether they want to buy or not because the reduced supply of fish will cause prices to increase, and this is a fact in the annual monsoon season,” he said.