



Back to daily chores: A woman putting her clothes out to dry in front of her house that was destroyed by Sunday's earthquake in West Lombok. So far, 387 people have died from the 7.0-magnitude temblor. — AP

SUNDAY STAR 12/08/2018 Ms.26

Lombok lifted 25cm by devastating quake

TANJUNG (Indonesia): Scientists say the powerful Indonesian earthquake that killed nearly 400 people lifted the island it struck by as much as 25cm.

The National Disaster Mitigation Agency said yesterday that 387 people died, jumping from the 321 it reported the previous day, as search and rescue teams continued to sift through the rubble and people already buried by relatives are accounted for.

Using satellite images of Lombok from the days following the Aug 5 quake, scientists from Nasa and the California Institute of Technology's joint rapid imaging project made a ground deformation map and measured changes in the island's surface.

In the northwest of the island near the epicentre, the rupturing faultline lifted the earth by a quarter of a metre.

In other places it dropped by 5cm to 15cm.

Nasa said satellite observations can help authorities respond to earthquakes and other

natural or man-made disasters.

Almost 390,000 people, about 10% of Lombok's population, are homeless or displaced after the earthquake, which damaged and destroyed about 68,000 homes.

Disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said three districts in the north of Lombok still haven't received any assistance.

The governor of West Nusa Tenggara province, which includes Lombok, has extended the official emergency period by two weeks to Aug 25.

"It's estimated the death toll will continue to grow because there are still victims who are suspected of being buried by landslides and collapsed buildings and there are deaths that have not been recorded," Sutopo said.

The number of evacuees fluctuates, he said, because not all evacuee points have been counted and some people tend to their gardens and properties during the day and

return to the tent camps at night.

Some people don't need to evacuate because their homes aren't damaged but have come to refugee centres because they feel traumatised.

Nearly a week since the 7.0 quake, Lombok is still reeling but glimmers of normality were returning for some and devout villagers are making plans for temporary replacements of mosques that were flattened.

In Tanjung, one of the worst affected districts in the hard-hit north of the island, a food market opened yesterday and locals bought vegetables and fish.

Some shops also opened for business despite being in damaged buildings.

"I had to borrow money from someone to buy morning glory to be resold here," said Natbudi, one of the market vendors.

"If I just stay at the camp and don't come here to sell then I don't have money to buy rice." — AP