

Flood forecast now possible seven days in advance

KUALA LUMPUR: It is now possible to forecast floods seven days before they happen, allowing alerts to be issued to the public two days in advance.

At present, floods can only be forecast six hours earlier.

The Drainage and Irrigation Department is working on upgrading the system.

DID director-general Datuk Seri

Zulkefli Hassan said the Flood Forecast and Alert Programme (PRAB) issued early warnings that would make evacuation easier.

"This project will save lives and property, and lessen the damage on public infrastructure," he said here yesterday.

Zulkefli said RM550mil had been set aside for the PRAB.

"It involves 40 major river basins

where flood forecasts and alerts could be issued with support of data from the Meteorological Department."

There was also a need, he said, to increase public awareness on the importance of following early disaster warnings so authorities can conduct more coordinated assistance and rescue efforts.

As a long-term measure, Zulkefli

said serious attention should be given to a holistic approach to secure national water resources, including minimising the effects of climate change.

For this purpose, he said DID developed the National Water Balance System (Nawabs), a management tool to help make forecasts and alerts during water crisis or droughts. — Bernama

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Datuk Seri Zulkefli Hassan