



Waterlogged: Parts of Alor Setar in water during a flood on Nov 5. — AP

DID doing a lot to curb floods

WE APPRECIATE the concerns highlighted in “Make Mitigating Floods A Truly National Objective” (*The Star*, Nov 3).

In this regard, we acknowledge that although the major reason for flood is usually rainfall, human interventions to land and water systems also lead to frequent and severe floods.

The Government has taken measures to manage flood risks, primarily focusing on the protection of human health and safety, valuables and property by carrying out programmes to address the occurrence of floods.

Integrated Flood Management or IFM is an approach taken by the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID) that includes structural and non-structural measures in managing flood occurrence.

IFM promotes an integrated, rather than fragmented, approach to flood management. It integrates land and water resources development in a river basin, within the context of integrated water resources management, with a view to maximising the efficient use of floodplains and to minimising loss of life.

The DID is constantly working to improve the river and drainage systems. It also provides flood forecasting and warning to residents while raising public awareness and preparedness for flood occurrences among the public.

Nevertheless, these actions need commitment and cooperation from every segment of society in reducing flood risks.

The DID has been carrying out a number of flood mitigation projects to reduce losses in terms of lives as well as economic damage due to floods. About 9% of the country’s land mass is subject to frequent flooding, and this will be reduced significantly upon the completion of flood mitigation projects within the stipulated duration.

This year alone, the ministry, through the DID, implemented or is implementing 57 flood mitigation projects which will benefit around 430,000 people staying in flood prone areas.

The projects include widening and deepening of rivers, installation of pumps, construction of detention ponds, flood control gates, flood bypasses and also upgrading of the drainage system.

With the completion of these projects, the lives and properties of affected people will be protected significantly.

We would like to reiterate that the Government is very committed in reducing the number of people affected by flood while ensuring their welfare is taken care of.

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