



New website to give latest info on floods

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MALACCA: The Department of Drainage and Irrigation (DID) has established a dedicated website to give up-to-date flood warnings.

The website can be accessed at “publicinfobanjir.water.gov.my” and is seen as an effective early warning system for floods.

Deputy Natural Resources and Environment Minister Tan Sri Joseph Kurup said the flood information would also be made available via social networking sites such as Facebook and

Twitter.

“Specific areas in Malaysia which are facing a flood risk will be made available through the website.

“With this online information, people in areas which are facing a high risk of floods can make early preparations, especially in view of the coming monsoon season.”

Kurup said this in his speech. He was representing Minister Datuk Seri Douglas Uggah Embas in launching the website, at a seminar on Best Management Practices in the DID Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), the IWRM website and the sec-

ond edition of the *Environment-Friendly Drainage Manual*, here.

Kurup said the information made available on the website was a result of a 10-year research programme undertaken by the department.

“The information on floods and prior warnings are given as early as two days.

“Water levels in rivers and the sea are monitored by our hydrological stations.

“The monitoring will be carried out especially during a downpour.

“This information will be uploaded on the website on a daily basis so that the public will get the latest updates.”

Braving stormy seas for a living

TUMPAT: Fishermen here continue to go to sea despite unfavourable weather resulting in strong waves and storms.

This is because they have no other means to earn a livelihood and support their families.

A majority of the fishermen from Kampung Pantai Geting here are holders of the “monsoon licence” which allows them to operate and fish only from November to April.

Ramli Ahmad said he had to take the chance of going to sea despite the un-

favourable weather although he was aware of the dangers.

“We are lucky because the waves now are not so high, with scattered rainfall. We will go to the sea as often as we can because when the monsoon season comes, we will not able to do so.”



Mansor Hitam, 58, and his wife Fatimah Puteh, 56, plucking chillies at their farm in Kampung Pecah Rotan. — NST picture by Rozainah Zakaria

Farmers fear monsoon

KUALA TERENGGANU: The 64 participants of a collective farm project in Batu Rakit here are worried that the upcoming monsoon season can threaten their livelihood, again.

They suffered losses totalling RM471,000 when the 46-hectare collective farm planted with watermelons was inundated for about three weeks during the last round of floods in March.

They are worried that their current crop of chillies, sweet corn and brinjals will also face the same predicament this time around.

Kampung Pecah Rotan collective farm project head Mohd Amin Abdul Razak, 50, said the

crops were planted after the watermelon project ended in September and will only be ready for harvesting in January.

"If the floods hit in January, we can perhaps harvest them early to lessen our losses. However, there is nothing we can do if they arrive earlier."

He said the floods' effects could be mitigated if the drainage system around the farm was upgraded.

"The farm is on lower ground compared with the surrounding areas and without sufficient drainage, it will turn into a large lake as flood waters tend to collect there easily."

'Guard against landslides'

KUALA LUMPUR: The Works Ministry has called on residents living in slopes and hilly areas to be extra cautious during the monsoon season.

This is in view of possible landslides occurring during the rainy season, said the ministry's corporate communications unit in a statement.

If there are any signs of a landslide, the ministry advised the public to quickly contact the authorities and take precautionary measures by immediately evacuating the area.

It said the ministry would soon release guidelines on how to identify potential landslide areas through the media so the public can do their

part to prevent tragedies such as the recent Hulu Langat landslide from recurring

The ministry said Malaysians could take preventive measures by cleaning out water drains on hill slopes and redirecting stagnant water into existing ditches.

They should also make sure ditches were in good condition and not blocked by garbage or plants. They should also look out for early signs of landslides such as cracks in the pavement and retaining walls as well as leaning electric poles on slopes.

For more information, contact the Slope Engineering Branch at 03 - 26967331,