



Valley
View

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WE MALAYSIANS can count our blessings that we are free from many natural calamities, such as earthquakes, hurricanes and typhoons.

But as a country with tropical weather, torrential downpours that could lead to floods are a regular occurrence especially during the monsoon season.

This year is no exception.

While the taps ran dry for people in Balakong and adjacent areas around June, the year-end has brought along with it lots of rain, thunder and dark skies.

When rivers overflowed, lower lands could not escape from floods.

This is what Kajang has experienced a few times.

In November, hundreds of residents in Dengkil found their homes badly flooded in the wee hours of the morning.

Fortunately, the authorities jumped into action immediately. All flood victims in Dengkil were safely evacuated to relief centres that were put up to offer temporary shelter to the residents.

They were given food, blankets and other necessities while waiting for the flood water to subside.

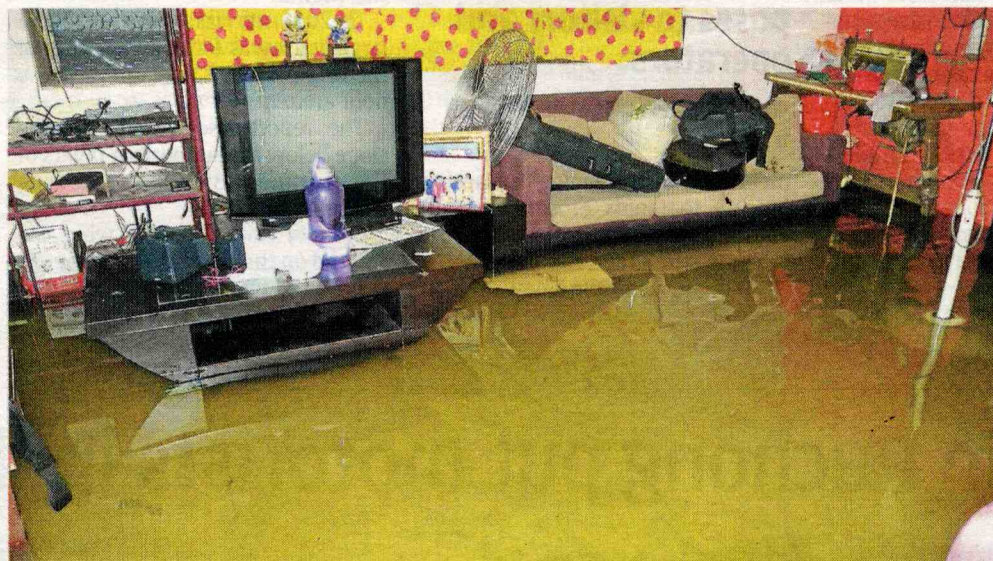
When met at the evacuation centres, worries were clearly etched on the faces of the flood victims. They were mostly devastated by the losses they suffered.

While the state government and relevant authorities figure out flood mitigation plans, it is crucial for the residents to arm themselves with knowledge on how to prepare and respond to flood and other disasters.

Blessed with low risk of natural disasters in our country, the public

Bracing for the stormy weather

We should be ready when flashfloods occur



Inundated:

Furniture and electrical items in this house were damaged after a downpour resulted in a flashflood in Kajang recently.

is generally underprepared when it comes to dealing with emergencies.

But there's no harm in looking out for tips and put together several measures ahead of the rainy seasons.

According to Ready (www.ready.gov), a national public service advertising campaign in the United States, the public should build an emergency kit in advance. The supplies kit should contain of food, water and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours.

Among the list of recommended food items are canned food, nuts, dried fruit, cereal, crackers and

canned juices.

The United State's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov), meanwhile, advises flood victims to carry essential documents, such as identification cards in waterproof bags.

It also recommends the people to turn off gas, electricity and water, and disconnect appliances before leaving the houses, if time permits.

Besides, it is essential to have a fire extinguisher ready in the house and ensure everyone knows where to look for it and how to operate it during emergencies.

Among others, CDC also offered

this tip: raise switches, sockets and wiring at least 12 inches above the projected water level.

When flash floods happened, stalled vehicles are a common sight in the Klang Valley. Ready advises motorists against driving through a flooded road as "the depth of water is not always obvious".

It also warns motorists that six inches of water could cause a vehicle to lose control and probably stall.

As 2013 approaches and the wet season makes way for sunny weather, let's learn from the past and always be prepared for the rainy days.