

Set up a proper flood warning system

FLOODING is a common occurrence in our country with the serious ones normally happening in the east coast of the peninsula, causing great damage year after year. Malaysians simply accept this along with the losses that come with it, however.

Those who are lucky can move some of their belongings to a higher floor but usually it will be too late by the time people realise it is flooding. But what if these people are told there is a high chance of flooding in their area soon? Would they leave their expensive belongings in areas that would be flooded? Would they sit still in their houses, putting their children and loved ones in danger, if they knew it was going to flood? Probably not.

The potential to reduce the cost of damages simply by being prepared is very high. Yet, time and again, we are forced to count our losses, wait for government aid and lose our important sources of income. We spend billions of ringgit on flood mitigation and damage recovery but we still face huge losses come the next flood.

This does not mean that flood mitigation is not important, however. It simply means the cost of damage can be further reduced if the people are given adequate time to prepare.

Floods occur mainly during the monsoon season, and the next one is just around the corner!

There is also this phenomenon known as the Madden-Julian Oscillation which brings increased rainfall.

All these can be predicted, and the technology to do this is available. Even if we cannot predict months or weeks ahead, a simple



one to two days heads-up would be a great help.

Having the technology to make accurate forecasts is not enough, though. We also need more efforts to notify the people of incoming heavy rain and floods.

Just as how the people are constantly warned about a coming dry season and drought, they should also be getting forecasts

for heavy rainfall and possible floods. It would be a waste for such useful information to just sit in a government website or database.

The main point I would like to make is that instead of putting all our money into flood mitigation, why not invest some in weather forecasting and making sure the information reaches the public? If

the people themselves can make the proper preparations, surely the burden on the Government would be reduced? Wouldn't it be much easier to save ourselves if floods were no longer a "surprise"?

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