

Ministry issues flood warning

Heavy rain expected in low-lying areas during monsoon transition

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PETALING JAYA: Communities in low-lying areas and coastal parts of the country are urged to be alert during the transitional phase of the monsoon, which is bringing heavy rainfall and with it risks of flash floods and structural damage.

The transition phase, which started late September and will last until early next month, puts the coastal areas at risk especially if continuous heavy rainfall coincided with the high tide, said the Water, Land and Natural Resources Ministry.

It also warned that the frequency of flash floods occurring will increase especially in low-lying areas, with flash floods having been reported in Perak, Selangor and Kuala Lumpur of late.

"According to the Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) weather forecast, the country is experiencing the monsoon transition period until early next month.

"During this phase, thunderstorms, heavy rainfall and strong winds within a short period of time especially in the late evenings, will occur frequently.

"The east coast of the peninsular and parts of Sabah and Sarawak will be exposed to the same situation," said the ministry in a statement yesterday.

The ministry urged state authorities to conduct frequent inspections on drainage systems in their areas and also on the rivers and drains to ensure the water flow is free of blockage.

"Those staying in areas prone to flash floods and also in low-lying areas are urged to always be on alert about the rainfall throughout this period," said the ministry.

Rainfall and river water levels can be monitored via website publicinfobanjir.water.gov.my.

The regional haze situation affecting Malaysia is improving during the monsoon transition phase as most areas in the country will receive weak winds from various directions, said MetMalaysia.

Most states in the peninsula are expected to receive average rainfall levels between 150mm and 350mm, said MetMalaysia in its weather report for October to March next year.

However, Perlis, Perak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are forecast to receive above average rainfall levels between 300mm and 420mm.

Kedah and Penang are also expected to get a lot more rain than other states, between 350mm and 500mm.

In Sarawak, most areas are expected to receive average rainfall levels between 200mm and 450mm except around Kuching, Sri Aman



Marooned: A flash flood that inundated Segambut last week after heavy rain in Kuala Lumpur.

and Samarahan, which are expected to receive less rainfall, at between 200mm and 300mm.

In Sabah, Kudat, Keningau and Tawau are expected to get average rainfall levels between 100mm and 250mm with other parts expected to receive between 200mm and 400mm.

MetMalaysia said that the north-east monsoon will start early next month and end in March next year, bringing heavy rains to the east coast states.

"During this monsoon period, episodes of comprehensive, heavy monsoon rains are expected to occur especially in the east coast states of the peninsula.

"Terengganu and Kelantan will get average rainfall levels between 350mm and 850mm," said MetMalaysia.

Meanwhile, the east of Pahang and Johor are expected to receive average rainfall levels between 300mm and 450mm during the north-east monsoon.

States like Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are expected to get a little less, between 250mm and 450mm.

In Sabah, most parts are forecast to have an average rainfall level between 250mm to 500mm while in Sabah and Labuan, most parts will receive between 200mm and 400mm.

Fire Dept to freeze leave if Perak floods worsen

IPOH: The Perak Fire and Rescue Department will freeze leave of its personnel if the flood situation worsens.

State director Azmi Osman said currently, only between 10% and 20% of personnel were allowed to go on leave, following the recent flash floods in several districts.

"Our strength now comprises 1,100 officers, 220 auxiliary and 880 volunteer firefighters.

"In the event we need extra help, we will seek assistance from neighbouring states, including boats and trucks," he said.

Azmi said they have mobilised 10 trucks, 30 four-wheel drive vehicles and 44 boats for flood operations around the state.

He said they have identified several high risk areas such as Sungai Siput, Kerian and Hilir Perak, and have been monitoring the areas regularly.

In Johor Baru, a total of 1,250 firemen were ready to face the coming flood season in the state.

Johor director Datuk Yahaya Madis said apart from the flood, they would also be on duty during the Tanjung Piai by-election as well as the upcoming school examination period next month.

He said various preparations had been made, including equipment, machinery, training, monitoring in areas of potential impact, as well as the possibility of freezing the leave of personnel. — Bernama

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