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Flood preparedness module for P’pang

Daily Express (KK), Malaysia



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Jinni Juanis
PENAMPANG: The Penampang Municipal Council (MPP), in collaboration with Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), is developing a community flood preparedness guidebook to help local leaders better manage flood risks in the district.
The guidebook, believed to be the first of its kind for Penampang, will serve as a practical manual for communities before, during and after floods. It is also intended as a template for other districts facing similar disasters.
As part of the development process, researchers from the UMS Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Department of Public Health, conducted interviews and focus group discussions with Village Development and Security Committee (JKKK) leaders from four flood-prone villages in Moyog — Kg Penampang Proper, Kibabaig, Nambazan and Kolopis.
The villages were selected based on the severity and frequency of flooding in the areas. Kolopis and Kibabaig are locally known as “water bowls” as they are often among the first areas to be inundated and the last for floodwaters to recede.
The first interview session was held in Kg Kolopis. Its JKKK Chairman, Januarius



UMS researchers Dr Norhidayah Danial and Dr Nabilah Ayob (third and fourth from left) with KK Josue Mojiun, Jacob Majalap, Thomas Mojiun and Valin Tivit.
Majalap, welcomed the initiative, saying residents had previously relied mainly on personal experience when dealing with floods.
“It is high time this module book is created to help residents prepare before, during and after floods,” he said, adding that local victims were ready to share their experiences to ensure the guidebook would be practical and useful.
Another committee member, Lousun-

tim Valin Tivit, also pledged his support for the pilot project.
UMS researchers Dr Norhidayah Danial and Dr Nabilah Ayob said the discussions aimed to develop a training module that was practical, relevant and suited to the local community.
They said the sessions allowed community leaders to share their experiences, challenges and recommendations, which would form the basis for developing the module.
Among the key areas discussed were past flood experiences, existing preparedness measures, challenges at village level, early warning systems, the roles of community leaders and suitable training methods.
The discussions also examined appropriate topics, activities, delivery methods, training duration and logistics, as well as the feasibility and sustainability of the module and its supporting materials.
Participants included village heads, JKKK chairpersons and members, zone leaders, association leaders and other individuals recognised as community coordinators.
The project team hopes the completed module will strengthen flood preparedness and improve the resilience of communities in Penampang.
Residents, however, claim that flooding in the district has continued to worsen despite various efforts to address the problem.
They said even areas that previously did not experience flooding are now affected, while annual losses from damaged roads, landslides and buildings have reportedly reached millions of ringgit.



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SUMMARIES

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