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Cleanliness drive to be enhanced

Tony Emmanuel

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The national cleanliness campaign will be enhanced to reduce possible flash floods expected during the coming monsoon season and La Nina weather phenomenon.

Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh said the move was necessary as clogged drains and canals were identified as a major cause of flash floods during downpours.

Reminders from the Ministry have been sent out to local authorities on the need to emphasise cleanliness within their respective jurisdictions.

"We have advised the respective local authorities to initiate gotong-royong cleanliness campaigns, drawing assistance from the private sector and non-governmental organisations."

Ting was speaking after presenting a RM10 million contribution to Kuala Lumpur Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Kamaruzzaman Sharif at City Hall today.

The contribution was in lieu of assessment rates on government buildings in the city.

Also present was City Hall director-general Datuk Nordin Razak and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Tan Chai Ho, who is also Bandar Tun Razak Member of Parliament.

On the cleanliness campaign, Kamaruzzaman said City Hall has set aside an additional RM2.5 million, to the annual RM6 million budget, to clean up drains in the city.

Ting said the national cleanliness campaign, launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last August, was to enhance the nation's image.

"With landscaping efforts undertaken by City Hall, we would be able to achieve our garden-in-the-city objective by the turn of the century."

He also said all the respective agencies, including the Fire and Rescue Department, had been instructed to be prepared to respond to flash floods.

"From reports made available to us, we expect heavy rainfall, due to the La Nina weather phenomenon, sometime in October," he said.

He added that initial reports indicated that Sabah and Sarawak were expected to face the wrath of the phenomenon more than the peninsula.

Following the cheque presentation, Ting also presented a model of a user-friendly public toilet conceptualised by the Ministry and approved by the Government.

"We are planning to introduce the standard design toilets nationwide," he said.

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