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Dr M: M'sia can do without logging

'Move can help avoid devastating floods'

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KEPONG: Authorities should not only look to reducing the illegal felling of trees but logging in general if they want to avoid devastating floods, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He feared the floods would be an annual occurrence if nothing was done to stop deforestation.

"We have many sources of wealth in the country which do not cause environmental degradation and if we reduce even legal logging we will stand to benefit more," he said when unveiling the National Heritage plaque at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM).

Deforestation was a main cause of the devastating east coast floods recently.

- TUN DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD

Dr Mahathir said that deforestation was a main cause of the devastating east coast floods recently.

"Of course there are other factors (that cause the floods) but this is one of them," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia needed to take heed, learn from what happened and find ways to preserve as much jungle as possible.

He was happy to return to FRIM after three decades.

"I proposed for it to become an institution to promote forestry 30 years ago, and it has become a reality. The trees we see here now were not here then," he said,

He said it was refreshing to see Malaysia still had its jungles and greenery.

"We are very fortunate that in this country, plants grow very fast. And in fact in Kuala Lumpur if we don't prune the trees, in five years there will be the Kuala Lumpur jungle," he said.

He said Malaysia was very fortunate to have a rainforest climate except that sometimes it rained too much and there were floods.



Joyous event: Dr Mahathir at the unveiling of FRIM in Kepong as a national heritage.