

RM1 billion for flood mitigation

> Funds will be in addition to RM150 million already allocated by federal govt, says Najib

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GEORGE TOWN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak yesterday announced RM1 billion ringgit for 13 flood mitigation projects in Penang.

"The federal government has allocated RM150 million and is willing to consider additional allocation according to the needs in overcoming flood issues," he told a press conference after visiting flood victims at a relief centre in Sekolah Agama Rakyat Nyiok Sebatang in Tasek Gelugor.

Najib said he will call for a meeting between the federal and state governments to discuss how the projects can be implemented.

He also lauded the cooperation between state and federal agencies, which worked around the clock to assist flood victims.

Najib said climate change is a global phenomenon that not only affects Malaysia but also many other nations.

He said even a highly developed country like the United States

experienced powerful hurricanes and tornadoes and was faced with the challenge of protecting its citizens during natural disasters.

"The aftermath (from a natural disaster) is bad as it strikes any nation regardless of how developed the countries may be. No country is spared from it and Malaysia will do its best to help its people to cope."

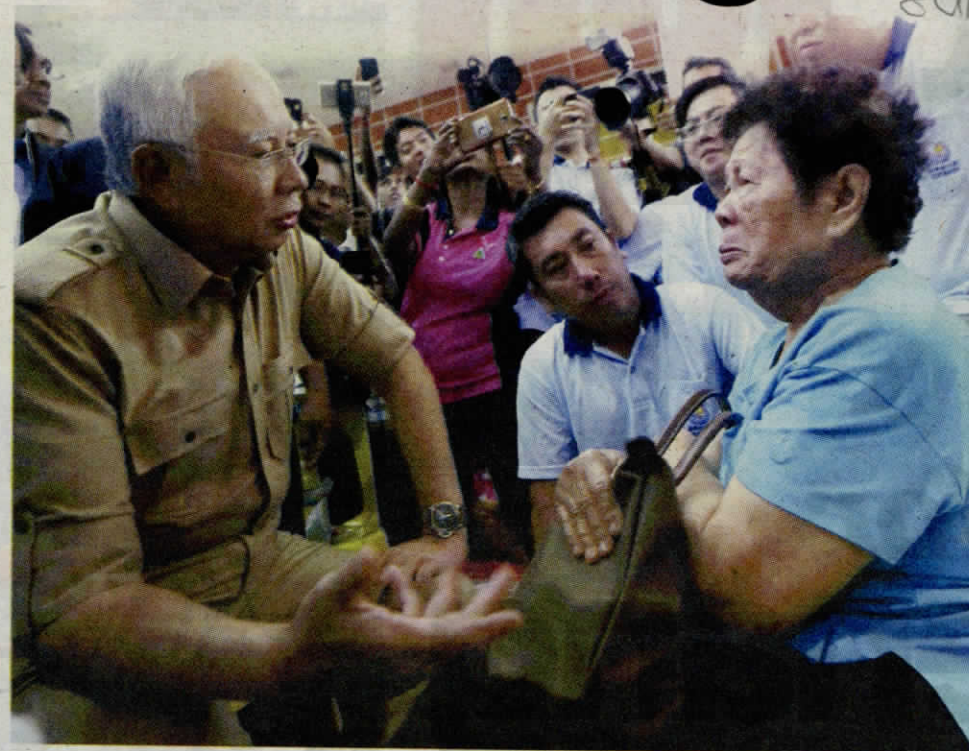
Najib urged the people and developers to help the state and federal agencies to prevent future disasters by not discarding their waste into the drainage system.

He also said all developers must follow local government bylaws such as the hill slope guidelines so their projects will not affect the environment.

Failure to adhere to the rules and regulations will cause bad after-effects on the environment and may subsequently lead to calamities.

On why there was no early weather warning before the torrential rains on Sunday, he said natural disasters were something that happened beyond expectations.

"It was a very unusual



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Najib speaking to flood victim Loh Saw Kang, 75, during his visit to a relief centre yesterday.

(downpour) and coupled with strong winds as well as the burst embankment on Sungai Muda in Kedah, the waters rose fast."

"We suffered from three unexpected elements, which all

happened at the same time."

Najib was accompanied by his wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor during his visit to affected areas.

Also present were Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng and federal

ministers Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong as well as Penang Umno liaison chairman Datuk Seri Zainal Abidin Osman.

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