

# Malaysia: Logging companies should pay for flood mitigation works, says PSM

Thursday 26 December 2024, by [KAUR Minderjeet](#) (Date first published: 8 December 2024).

**Party chairman Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj says taxpayers should not be burdened with the full cost of such projects, especially on the east coast.**

**PETALING JAYA:** Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) has called on logging companies to contribute a percentage of their profits to the government to be channelled towards flood mitigation projects, especially on the east coast.

PSM chairman Dr Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj said this is to keep Putrajaya from having to rely entirely on public funds to finance such work.

“Why should taxpayers bear the full cost while logging companies take home millions in profits,” he asked, when contacted by FMT.

His comments come after Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim announced last Sunday immediate allocations of RM25 million each for Kelantan and Terengganu, after both states were hit by severe floods.

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, said the funds would be used to repair essential infrastructure such as roads and drainage systems.

Jeyakumar laid the blame for the severity of the floods on deforestation, which he said was a growing problem in Kelantan and Terengganu, where natural forests are being replaced by timber plantations.

“Up to 80% of rainwater absorbed by forest soil does not end up in rivers as it acts like a sponge, replenishing groundwater and helping control water flow.

“When we destroy forests, we disrupt this natural process, which can lead to greater flooding,” he said.

Independent environmental watchdog Rimbawatch backed up Jeyakumar’s claims, saying extensive deforestation has been carried out in the two states, with Kelantan losing 54,000ha of forest between 2017 and 2021.

“A newer report published this year found that Kelantan is projected to deforest 233,000ha of forest reserves, and Terengganu 55,000ha, for timber plantations alone,” its director Adam Farhan told FMT.

Jeyakumar urged the government to carry out an audit of ongoing flood mitigation projects to determine how these projects are being implemented.

The 2022 Auditor-General's Report had revealed that the east coast's flood forecasting and warning programme has been ineffective, showing an accuracy rate of just 5.6%, despite the RM145 million invested into it between 2015 and 2022.

Former natural resources and environment ministry deputy secretary-general Nadzri Yahaya said such an audit would need to look into whether measures such as embankments and river dredging have been effective in holding back the effects of intense rain.

"The government needs to go back to the drawing board, as the monsoon floods are only going to get worse due to climate change," said Nadzri.

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