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Cooperation among field experts needed



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METEOROLOGISTS and climate scientists need to work together in safeguarding lives and property.

With the escalating occurrences of severe weather conditions, climate and environmental natural hazards, cooperation among field experts is necessary, said Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications Abdul Mutalib Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Setia Dato Paduka Hj Mohd Yusof.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the seminar on Social and Economic Benefits and Delivery of Meteorological and Hydrological Services jointly organised by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and Brunei Darussalam Meteorological Department (BDMD), the permanent secretary said that environmental disasters bring deep implications to countries such as the loss of food production and security.

"Tsunamis, earthquakes, typhoons, floods have ravaged countries in this region. Therefore, countries must prepare to strengthen resilience and reinforce response and recovery operations," said the permanent secretary.

He urged the meteorologist community to fully optimise Information Communications Technology (ICT) which can assist in dispensing accurate, reliable and timely sharing of information.

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRCRC), the 2012 Typhoon Bopha affected 6.3 million lives in the Philippines but thousands of lives were saved because 99 per

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cent of population had access to mobile phones and were able to receive early warnings.

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"We know that climate and weather forecasting has achieved tremendous improvement in accuracy over the last 10 to 15 years. I consider this as a success story of man, machine and technology joining forces".

He commended WMO for their continuous efforts in facilitating and promoting the economic value of meteorological forecasts and information especially the willingness to collaborate with BDMD.

WMO says that natural disasters have taken two million lives and produced economic losses estimated at over US\$1.5 trillion (\$1.86 trillion).

Among the objectives of the seminar is to expose agencies and users to implementation, benefits and weather services provided by BDMD.

The seminar is held at The Rizqun International Hotel in Gadong over the course of five-days beginning yesterday,

Present at the opening ceremony yesterday was Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications Hj Idris Hj Md Ali.

Also present were ministry directors, deputy directors, experts from WMO, social scientists, director generals, participants from ASEAN, international experts from United States of America and Great Britain, private and government representatives.

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