

## **Flood death toll rises to 23 people**

As floodwater in the capital receded on Sunday, the Jakarta Disaster Mitigation Agency (BPBD) reported that the death toll from flood-related incidents during the last two weeks had risen to 23. "The latest victim was Sulaiman, a resident of Kebon Pala in Makasar district, East Jakarta. He fell into the rushing river when he was fishing today," Desmanto, a staff officer at the agency, said on Sunday. Sulaiman was among 11 people who had died as the result of the floods in East Jakarta. Another five victims had died in North Jakarta, three in West Jakarta, three in Central Jakarta and one in South Jakarta.

Deaths were caused specifically by strong currents, electrocution, drowning and illness. The city's latest bout of flooding over the last two weeks continues to affect 118,541 people in 29 subdistricts in 14 districts. Parts of East Jakarta and West Jakarta are still inundated, including Bidara Cina, Kampung Melayu and Cawang in East Jakarta and Rawa Buaya, Kali Angke and Kapuk in West Jakarta. Currently, 38,079 evacuees are taking shelter in 150 locations, down from the 65,013 who were in 247 shelters on Jan. 21. Meanwhile, around 600 evacuees in Kampung Pulo, Jatinegara, had returned home to clean up their houses on Saturday.

"To date, the water level is between 10 centimeters and 100 centimeters. Hopefully, there will be no rain in the upstream area, so it [the floodwater] will further subside," Kampung Melayu subdistrict head Bambang Pangestu said as quoted by tempo.co on Sunday. Hari Tirta, head of the Meteorology Information sub-directorate at the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), said the rainfall in the last three days was lighter than it had been over the past two weeks. However, Jakarta and its neighboring areas are bracing for more downpour in the next three days.

"So far, there is still potential for hard rain in the southern and eastern parts of Greater Jakarta in the evening or early morning. The showers will be scattered and short in duration," Hari said. BMKG forecast light rain to medium rain for North Jakarta, West Jakarta and South Jakarta, especially in the afternoon and evening from Jan. 27 to 30. During the next three days, light to medium rain is also forecast for Bogor, West Java. The northern part of the area expects heavy rain in the afternoon and evening. Heavy showers may also hit the northern and southern area of Depok in the afternoon and evening.

A joint team from the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT), the National Mitigation Disaster Agency (BNPB) and the Air Force has executed a weather engineering project since Jan. 19. The project was launched after Governor Joko "Jokowi" Widodo declared a state of emergency. The team relies on weather forecasts from the BMKG to conduct the project. "During the past two days, we only had one flight per day to disperse salt because the mass of clouds was decreasing. But we will start flying two times per day tomorrow," BPPT Artificial Rain Technical Unit head F. Heru Widodo said. He said that even with just one C-130 Hercules aircraft, the technology reduced rainfall by 22 percent during the first five days of execution. The team expects to get an additional Casa light transport aircraft from the Air Force on Tuesday.

"We will evaluate this technology after a month," he said, adding that the team would continue the weather engineering until March 14.