

Hot spots detected in Sumatra

While it drizzles in other parts of the nation, Sumatra has been in the middle of a heat wave that has created several hot spots that are at a risk of fire.

Officials at the local station of the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) have identified 45 hot spots in Sumatra, including 23 in Riau, using remote satellite imagery.

Most of the hot spots in Riau were in Pelalawan regency, including six in the Tesso Nilo National Park.

Pekanbaru BMKG station chief Yudhistira said that hot spots were also detected in Bengkalis and Siak regencies. The number of hot spots is expected to continue to increase as forecasters are predicting sunny skies over Sumatra until next week.

Yudhistira said that the forecast for the rainy weather typically expected in Riau this time of year was disrupted by tropical storms in Vietnam.

Temperatures in the province have hit 33.5 degrees Celsius in the past few days, creating hot spots of high temperature where forest or plantation fires could be ignited.

Forest fires in Sumatra have been a serious issue among Indonesia's neighbors, as thick smoke from the fires, both natural and those set to clear land, have raised health concerns in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.

However, Indonesia's neighbors have yet to complain about smoke from forest fires this month.