

# 'Think of the rakyat', MMA tells PM

By Farah Solhi - October 4, 2022 @ 4:06pm



*MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said Malaysians could be exposed to the risks of diseases, injuries and even death if a national polls occurred during floods - NSTP/ FAIZ ANUAR*

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian Medical Association is urging the prime minister to seriously consider the dangers to public health that come with a general election held amid floods.

MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said Malaysians could be exposed to the risks of diseases, injuries and even death if a national polls occurred during floods.

He said water- and food-borne diseases such as typhoid fever, cholera, hepatitis A, dysentery and food poisoning were also possible, and people would experience symptoms including diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fever or headache.

"There is also the risk of leptospirosis if a person is exposed to the leptospira sp bacteria found in the urine of four-legged mammals such as rats, dogs, cats, cows and so on.

"Without treatment, leptospirosis can lead to serious health issues such as kidney damage, meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain and spinal cord), liver failure, respiratory distress, and even death.

"Other potential health issues as a result of exposure to floodwater include conjunctivitis, skin irritation and skin infections.

"We are most concerned about the vulnerable groups such as the disabled, elderly and expectant women who may expose themselves to these dangers if they were to brave the floods to exercise their democratic right to vote," he said in a statement today.

MMA said its major concern was a possible medicine supply shortage that will be needed to treat some of these diseases.

"The last thing we will want is a health crisis at a time when the most needed medicines are in short supply.

"In recent years, it has been difficult to predict which areas will be affected by floods. Many places that have never before experienced floods have been hit by floods.

"This too will need to be given some thought, especially in the planning of polling centres in the event that the general election is held," he said.

The country, he said, is on the path to recovery from the pandemic and there are finally some signs of economic recovery.

Therefore, the association hoped that the prime minister will decide wisely on what is best for the people.

"Politics should not be prioritised over the health and wellbeing of the people," he said.