

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

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We Russians were glad to help 1971 KL flood victims

MY heart bleeds when I see on television how Malaysians suffered from the latest floods, especially when I see familiar places where I used to visit.

I admire the resilience of those whose homes were flooded. It is at these moments that friendship, mutual assistance and compassion are manifested.

Despite some issues, it is good to see the government helping people and providing funds to victims.

What is noticeable is the role of the army in helping people.

The soldiers' help shows how close they are to the people, how dear the life of every citizen is to them.

When looking at the pictures of the flood, I remember the great Kuala Lumpur floods of 1971

Then, Universiti Malaya, located on higher ground, was not affected by the floods and therefore provided its premises as an evacuation centre.

Hundreds of victims took refuge at Dewan Tunku Canselor.

And we, Russian students studying at the university, became volunteers, and with local students, collected clothes, bedding and food.

From the top of the hill, we saw the flooded city, houses and shops drenched with water, and boats on which people moved.

The 1971 floods were said to have been worse than the big previous one in the 1920s.

Now, a few areas in Selangor and other states are flooded too.

I remember the Pahang Tua village in Pekan hit by floods, where we, the 10 members of the UM Students Service Corps, including two Russians, helped our foster parents fix their houses and repaired one bridge.

Our help was a drop in the ocean, but we were proud to have helped.

The government then provided credits and seeds to restore damaged padi fields.

I feel very sad watching reports about Malaysians suffering from the floods, but please know that you are not alone.

Know that you have friends all over the world, and they sympathise with you and are ready to help.

And we should be optimistic. The rain is not eternal, and will be replaced by the sunshine.

How well the poet Kassim Ahmad said in his poem *Dialog*:

*There will be a day. There will be a sun.
Do you hear, frogs don't croak anymore.
Tomorrow's heat will dry the field
And the harvest of rice will be rich!*

DR VICTOR A. POGADAEV

Former lecturer
Universiti Malaya



The army has been a big help to flood victims. PIC BY OSMAN ADNAN