



**High-flyer:** Visitors taking a closer look at the UAV-RS during its launch at Agency Remote Sensing Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur.

# Going sky high to monitor floods

## Aerial vehicles to relay data in real time

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The authorities will be able to monitor floods and carry out relief operations in a better way through the deployment of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).

Yesterday, the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry launched its first UAV for this purpose.

Minister Datuk Seri Madius Tangau said the RM3mil UAV would assist authorities involved in the operations to better gauge the extent of the floods.

"The UAV will be able to relay real-time data on the ground which will be shared with the relevant agencies," he said after unveiling the ministry's first remote-sensing UAV here yesterday.

He said the data would eventually be made available to the public via the websites of respective agencies or ministries involved in the relief operations.

"In the past, we relied on satellite remote sensing for data. The use of the UAV will help complement this," he added.

Tangau said the UAV could also be used

for land management purposes such as plantation auditing or monitoring illegal logging activities.

"We will also be able to deploy the UAV to monitor haze and fire hotspots," he added.

The UAV-RS was a joint development by the ministry, Multimedia University and UST Sdn Bhd at a cost of RM3mil.

Research and development for the UAV-RS began in 2008 with the prototype clocking 180 hours and four minutes of flight time since its maiden flight in 2010.

The petrol-driven aircraft has an air loft time of four hours at a maximum ceiling of 3,000m and with a flight radius of 100km.

Last year, massive floods hit Kelantan, Pahang, Terengganu, Perak, Sabah and Sarawak, which resulted in more than 20 fatalities and the evacuation of thousands of people from their homes.

On Oct 9, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced the setting up of a master unit to manage volunteers and relief supplies in preparations to face the possibility of the annual year-end floods.

