

NEWS IN IMAGE SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asian coastal cities sinking fastest

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ANN/THE STRAITS TIMES – Southeast Asian coastal cities are sinking the fastest globally, which could amplify the impacts – such as massive flooding – of imminent sea-level rise, a recent study has found.

Sea levels are rising globally as the Earth’s ice sheets melt and as warming sea water expands. Sinking land, or land subsidence, can aggravate the problem, a team of international scientists led by the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) found.

PhD student at NTU’s Asian School of the Environment and the Earth Observatory of Singapore Cheryl Tay noted that the many coastal cities in Asia are now centres of growth and rapid urbanisation. This has driven up demand for groundwater extraction to meet growing needs.

This, in turn, causes land to sink rapidly, said Tay who is the first author of the research study, which was done in collaboration with the University of New Mexico, ETH Zürich and Nasa’s Jet Propulsion Lab, which is managed by the California Institute of Technology.

