

Dredging work to start at Penang rivers

GEORGE TOWN: Even as the water level continues to rise and flood homes in Penang, dredging work will begin along several rivers today.

Dredging work will take place along Sungai Pinang, Sungai Air Itam, Sungai Dondang, Sungai Jelutong and at the Sungai Dondang retention pond.

The dredging, said the state Department of Drainage and Irrigation (DID), was part of flood mitigation measures to prepare for the impact of the north-east monsoon.

"We will also clear the drains to ensure smooth water flow," it said in a statement yesterday.

However, the long-term solution to the floods, which have hit the state for the fifth time in three weeks, will be the Sungai Pinang flood mitigation project, it said.

The Federal Government had set aside RM150mil for the third phase of the project, which is expected to begin next year until 2020.

Yesterday, Penangites again had to struggle with floods when water swamped more than 100 houses on the island and the mainland after a six-hour downpour.

At one time, some areas in Jalan P. Ramlee, Kampung Masjid, Jalan Singgora, Kampung Makam, Kampung Rawana, Lorong Kulit, Kampung Dodol, Jalan Gemas and Jalan Terengganu had water levels as high as 0.6m.

Cumulative rainfall at the Bukit Bendera and Sungai Pinang stations were recorded at between 50mm and 55mm. This was made worse by tide that rose from 1.4m to 2.2m within three hours starting from 11.30pm on Saturday.



Lending a hand: Civil Defence Force personnel transferring some belongings to higher ground during the flash floods at Kampung Makam in Penang.

Over at the mainland, several areas in Butterworth — Sungai Lokan, Bagan Lalang, Sungai Mak Mandin and Sungai Nyior — also came under 0.6m-high water levels after heavy rain.

With the rain stations in Bakar Kapor, Penaga, in the north Seberang Prai and Ampang Jajar, Butterworth, recording 65mm and

70.5mm in rainfall, Sungai Prai burst its banks, affecting some 50 homes in Kampung Perlis in Jalam Assumption.

Fishermen near Tasek Gelugor are complaining that the wetter than usual rainy season is affecting their livelihood.

Sungai Korok and Air Hitam Fishermen Cooperative chairman

Ramli Hashim said that about 200 fishermen could not go out to work.

"The rainy season has affected their catch as the strong river current is dangerous to small boats.

"So far, we have taken steps to improve the infrastructure at the jetties," he said, adding that this year's wet spell was the worst compared to previous years.