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Terengganu embarks on flood mitigation works

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Fire and Rescue Department director general Datuk Wira Mohd Noor Ibrahim signing a plaque of the East Coast Level Integrity Inspection Forum held in State Fire and Rescue Department Headquarters in Indera Mahkota, Kuantan, yesterday. Looking on is State Mufti Datuk Seri Dr Abdul Rahman Osman (extreme right),

KUALA TERENGGANU: The state government has embarked on several short-term and long-term flood mitigation projects since 2013 when half of the villages in Kemaman and the entire town of Chukai were submerged.

Mentri Besar Ahmad Razif Abd Rahman said the state had completed two projects – the building of water passages from Kampung Padang Bual mosque to the Sungai Angga bridge in Besut and flood mitigation works in Taman Rakyat in Hulu Terengganu.

“The works we have embarked on include deepening, widening and straightening the curves of the rivers that have been identified as slowing down the flow of water to the sea,” he said.

Besides these, Ahmad Razif said there were nine projects costing some RM154mil that involved flood mitigation in Dungun, Bukit Payong and Besut.

“Some of the projects have started, three others have been completed and some will be finished in 2018. We have also included the Chukai-Kemaman Phase 2 flood mitigation project under the 11th Malaysia Plan which cost over RM340mil.”

Ahmad Razif said the state government incurred losses amounting to millions of ringgit each time there was a major flood.

“Taking into account the severity of the floods in the past and public interest, there is definitely a need to give priority to such projects,” he said, admitting that some low-lying areas would be affected during the north-east monsoon.

Council workers have been seen cleaning and clearing rubbish from clogged drains around the city in preparation for the monsoon.

Meanwhile, in **Kuantan**, images and “news” about floods are flooding the social media, giving the Fire and Rescue Department in Pahang a headache. Its director-general Datuk Wan Mohd Nor Ibrahim appealed to Malaysians not to be too quick to believe or panic over what were being circulated via social media.

They should also avoid posting photographs and information quoting irrelevant sources, he said.

“Some pictures of floods posted on social media turned out to be images from years before. Or it was something that did not happen in our country,” he said after closing the East Coast Zone Integrity Inspection Forum in Indera Mahkota, Kuantan, yesterday.

Wan Mohd Nor said Malaysians should verify information from the relevant authorities.

“Members of the public should only liaise with the authorities for a clearer picture of any situation,” he said.

He also lamented cases where people made light of actual floods, assuming the occurrence was akin to a “festival”.

“Floods are a serious matter. We have been on the alert and we are prepared to do what is necessary,” he said, cautioning parents to be mindful of their children to ensure no drowning.

On another matter, Wan Mohd Nor said there were one or two cases of corruption involving the department’s personnel who accepted personal contributions.

“The department will keep doing what is necessary to curb corruption.

“We want to close the loopholes and opportunities that tempt our officers into committing corruption,” he said.