

# RM3.6b flood mitigation plan

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## Johor to be divided into six areas for better implementation of measures

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Better flood mitigation costing at least RM3.6bil is in the works for flood-hit Johor.

Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) director-general Datuk Keizrul Abdullah said they were dividing the state into six areas to better implement structural and non-structural measures to regulate flood flow, reduce the scale of floods and regulate activities at a river basin.

Keizrul said it would cost between RM600mil and RM1.5bil to carry out these and other measures in each zone and initial plans had been sub-

mitted to the Government.

"The six areas are Muar, Batu Pahat, Mersing, Kluang, Iskandar Region and Sungai Johor.

"We are looking at various options including providing new storage dams, widening and deepening rivers and having more flood bypass outlets," he said yesterday after speaking at the three-day East and South-East Asia regional seminar on flood hazard mapping jointly organised with the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management, Japan.

Keizrul said they were still working out a detailed flood protection plan and the cost was not part of the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

"The amount may look big but if we don't do something, the next flood might cause more and more damage resulting in billions of ringgit in losses," he said.

Flood hazard maps, used in many developed countries, show areas frequently inundated by floods as well as additional information such as water depth, relief centres and alternative evacuation routes as means to

reduce loss of lives and property.

Deputy Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk S. Sothinathan, who opened the seminar, said that although there were some flood hazard maps for some rivers and dams, there was still a need to develop one on a national scale.

"The maps, which show the extent of flooding based on some probabilities, can also assist flood relief machinery in rescue operations and is useful for environmental disaster management," he added.

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DATUK KEIZRUL ABDULLAH