

RM4bil for river project

DPM: Sungai Muar to be deepened as part of long-term mitigation

MUAR: Several stretches along the Muar River will be deepened and straightened under an ongoing RM4bil mitigation project, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said the mitigation project was approved following the big floods that hit Johor in 2006 and it must be speeded up in view of the flood situation in the state.

The project is currently being carried out in phase.

For Muar River, he said, the esti-

mated cost of deepening and straightening the river was expected to cost more than RM1bil and stretches affected would be in Muar and Segamat.

"I have discussed the matter with Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Douglas Unggah Embas.

"The drainage and irrigation department has identified the stretches to be deepened or straightened," Muhyiddin told reporters after visiting flood victims at the Pagoh Skill

Learning Institute relief centre, near here, yesterday.

He said, however, that the mitigation project would not be able to completely solve flood problem as it would be impossible to predict nature.

He said some other countries were also recently hit by floods, adding that the government would do everything possible to minimise the problem.

He also said that helicopters would be used to send aid to flood

victims who could not be reached by land or boats.

This, he said, was to ensure uninterrupted food supply to the victims.

He said there had been no report of flood victims not receiving food from agencies assigned to help them.

"District offices and the welfare department have given an assurance that people affected by the floods in Johor will receive the aid they need," he added.



Nowhere to run

An aerial view of the flood situation in Segamat on Tuesday showing how widespread and extensive the level of flooding has been. — Pix courtesy of Police Air Wing Unit

Johor floodwaters claim fourth victim

KOTA TINGGI: The floods in Johor claimed its fourth victim when a woman drowned after falling into a 2m-deep drain here.

Kota Tinggi OCPD Supt Osman Mohamed Sebot said the 52-year old woman from Kampung Lukut Cina left her house on Sunday at around 5pm but did not return home.

"Her son and his neighbours formed a search party after the woman could not be found," he said.

Supt Osman said the search team failed to locate her and the family

lodged a missing persons report on Sunday evening.

He said passers-by found the woman's body in a drain near Kg Lukut Cina at around 10.20am on Tuesday and a post-mortem conducted on the body revealed that she had drowned.

Other victims in the Johor floods were two women — who also drowned — from Kampung Rahmat in Kulaijaya and Chaah, Segamat, respectively, on Jan 30, and a man in Gemas Baru, Johor on Feb 1.

Meanwhile, the floods began to

recede in most areas in Johor, Malacca and Negri Sembilan and more evacuees were allowed to return yesterday evening.

However, in Pahang, the floods persisted despite the fine weather, with the number of evacuees rising to 2,081 from 1,941 early yesterday.

A police spokesman said Rompin recorded the highest number of victims at 1,783 followed by Temerloh with 298 victims.

Several roads remained closed to all vehicles, namely Jalan Kampung

Inoi, Kampung Baru Bukit Ibam, Sungai Gayong Kedaik bridge, Tanjung Kerayong bridge in Mentakab and Kampung Lubuk Batu Kota Bahagia bridge in Rompin.

The road at KM5 Felda Selancar, Rompin, was closed to heavy vehicles due to landslide while Jalan Hwa Li Cenderawasih and Jalan Lam Trading Cenderawasih are only passable by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Meanwhile, the road at KM22 of Jalan Kemayan-Risda in Bera is only passable to heavy vehicles.