

States brace for floods

Emergency measures in place for the East Coast

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KUALA TERENGGANU: Terengganu and Kelantan are bracing for the upcoming monsoon and flood season with various preparations already implemented, including several flood mitigation projects in flood-prone areas and distribution of emergency supplies.

Terengganu Drainage and Irrigation Department director Mat Hussin Ghani said among the flood mitigation projects set to be completed this year were improving the drainage of Sungai Kerak Marang, improving water flow at the Batu Buruk public park in Kuala Terengganu and constructing a better water flow system for Kampung Chalok in Setiu.

"The department conducts maintenance work on the main drains in the state every year but it will be in vain if the people fail to clear the drains at their homes regularly," he said yesterday.

"We discovered that some homes in flood-prone areas have clogged drains due to uncut weeds as well as rubbish."

Mat Hussin said the flood problems in the state were a yearly affair and the department took proactive measures to implement mitigation.

"We expect the projects to be implemented next year and 2013, pending approval from the ministry," he said.

Meanwhile, the state Welfare Department has sent out RM700,000 worth of emergency

supplies of basic necessities such as food and blankets to 112 flood-prone areas.

Among the areas are Hulu Terengganu, Setiu, Besut, Kemaman and Dungun which are known to be flood-prone.

Department director Zuhaimi Omar said it had also sent food caches to hard to reach places such as Pulau Redang and Pulau Perhentian.

In **KOTA BARU**, Kelantan National Security Council secretary Roslee Mamat said the state was taking necessary precautions to guard against severe flooding.

"Although it is a standard operating procedure every year, we have reminded the Fire and Rescue, Drainage and Irrigation, Health and Welfare departments to be prepared due to the massive floods in Thailand.

"We do not want a repeat of the great floods of 2004 and we want to be ready for any eventuality," he told *The Star*.

Roslee said all the relevant departments would be monitoring the flood situation at border towns in southern Thailand, as heavy downpours there would have adverse effects in towns like Pasir Panjang and the Pasir Mas district.

In the 2004 floods, 12 people were killed and 10,476 people evacuated.

Fire and Rescue Department assistant director-general Datuk Rusmani Muhamad said his department had put its 13,239-strong personnel nationwide on alert for possible floods, especially in the east coast states of Terengganu and Kelantan.