

Not ready

20 flood mitigation projects but none fully completed

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PETALING JAYA: There are 20 flood mitigation projects ongoing nationwide but none have been fully completed.

They are in various stages due to issues with funding, said Drainage and Irrigation Department's (DID) division of river basin and coastal management director Datuk Lim Chow Hock.

Lim said the projects would still be able to mitigate floods to some extent, depending on their level of completion.

He added that low-lying areas in various parts of the country were at high risk of massive flooding – as early as the end of this month – as rainfall was expected to be heavier this time around.

The Meteorological Department had recently said the country is expected to receive 20% to 40% more rain this year compared with last year.

The flood-prone areas in the country include Rantau Panjang, Kota Baru, Dungun, Pekan, Segamat, Kota Tinggi, Alor Setar, Perlis and Penang.

Pekan, Alor Setar, Kuching, Sibul and Segamat are among the areas where the flood mitigation projects are being carried out.

Lim estimated that damage could reach RM1.5bil this year if massive floods hit the country.

"This is excluding losses incurred due to the disruption

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Digging in: Dredging work being carried out in Sungai Gelugor, Penang. The second phase to deepen the river started on Tuesday as part of efforts to mitigate flood problems.

Improvements made but still not sufficient

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tion of business and other economic losses.”

Another source from the department said there had not been any major flood mitigation project implemented in Kota Tinggi, despite being ravaged by floods in 2007 and last year.

“Slight improvements have been made to the drainage systems and the rivers to ease the flow, but there have been no new projects.”

He added that a study conducted by experts had estimated that a mitigation project to prevent flooding in Kota Tinggi would cost the Government RM2.2bil and take up to 15 years to complete.

He said the allocation from the Government had only been enough to recover from the damages caused by last year's floods.

Lim advised Malaysians living in flood-prone areas to pay close attention to warnings issued by authorities, especially the Meteorological Department and the DID.

Alerts on floods can be accessed at publicin-fobanjir.water.gov.my.

