

We can stop 'Kangar Lake'

WORKING and living in Kangar is increasingly stressful, all because of frequent floods.

Forty years ago, only a few areas were affected, such as Kampung Bakau and Kangar Garden. In 1988, a major flood hit Perlis but the completion of the Northern Water Bypass through Bintong brought relief.

Then came the Timah Tasoh Dam and the highway to Changlun. In December 2005, fearing that the dam might burst, its full volume was discharged. Within hours, almost all of Kangar was flooded.

At the highway, water rose in areas that were never flooded before. Last October, an even bigger flood hit Kangar. Since then, there have been minor ones and there is speculation about bigger ones to come.

Today, one night of downpour and the sight of a swollen Sungai Perlis would cause great anxiety and stress. Therefore, it was heart-

ening to read about the flood-mitigation plans involving the Timah Tasoh Dam in October.

But the capacity of the dam has almost trebled, from 33.3 million cubic metres to 87 million cubic metres. This could worsen the situation.

The authorities said water would be stored "at the old capacity of 33.3 million cubic metres" and a source was quoted as saying that the water would be released well below the danger level.

So, Kangar will not be turned into a lake overnight. But for how long can we hold out against "the unexpected change in rainfall patterns"?

Now that there is a flood-mitigation plan, please prioritise it. Make funds easily available; highlight its progress in the media and in the state's monthly *Warta Perlis*.

Like all national five-year plans, it should be reviewed from time to time.

The implementers must hold dis-



Officials preparing for floods by **practising rescue operations** at Timah Tasoh Dam in Kangar.

cussions with the people and get feedback.

The authorities should maintain and rejuvenate all drainage systems like the ISO-certified H001 2004 Sungai Perlis and the North-

ern Water Bypass.

Make Kangar flood-free and bring back the joy of working and living in the town.

O.K.C., Kangar, Perlis