Retention wall blamed, too

DID: Incomplete stretch caused Kajang floods

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GEORGE TOWN: A 200m uncompleted stretch of retention wall at Sungai Jelok has been identified as another contributor for the flash floods in Kajang town last Friday.

Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) director-general Datuk Ahmad Husaini Sulaiman said there was a 2m high retention wall running along 1km of the river, but one stretch of the wall had yet to be completed.

"When the river flooded, the water overflowed into the town through that stretch," he said, adding that the floods were also caused by downpour and clogged drains.

It is learnt that the retention wall could not be completed because 21 temporary stalls erected by the Kajang Municipal Council on the river reserve area could not be shifted because of an agreement with the stall owners.

The Kajang flash floods, which occurred after a three-hour downpour, caught many by surprise with water levels rising to as high as 1m.

Many properties and vehicles were damaged, with some businesses reporting huge losses.

Ahmad Husaini said the department would take several flood mitigation measures to prevent recurrence.

"We will also improve the river flow and reduce the constrictions at Sungai Jelok," he said.

Besides the incomplete wall, Ahmad Husaini said the low soffit (underside) of the Sungai Jelok bridge in front of the Kajang market had resulted in backflow water from the river splashing into the market.

He added that the department would also pay close attention to all flood-prone areas in the country to ensure flood mitigation steps were in place.

In **PETALING JAYA**, a Meteorological Department report said Kajang received almost half of its December average rainfall on the day of the flash floods.

The report said the severe thunderstorm and heavy rain were caused by the convergence of wind and unstable atmosphere in the area.

On Monday, DID flood management division director Datuk Zainor Rahim Ibrahim said initial findings showed that the water flow in Sungai Jelok was constricted, resulting in its banks bursting during last week's heavy rain.

The constrictions included the low-deck bridge as well as rubbish that clogged its water passage.