

RM20m needed to curb floods

STILL WAITING: State applied to develop, upgrade drainage system in flood area

KUCHING

THE Sarawak government is still waiting for the outcome on the resubmission of a proposal to develop and upgrade the drainage system and flood mitigation around Jalan Batu Lintang-Jalan Rock and its vicinity, here, under the third rolling plan from the federal government, the state assembly sitting was told yesterday.

Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister's Office Datuk Len Talif Salleh said the Sarawak Drainage and Irrigation Department had made an application to the state and federal governments for the project, with a total cost of RM20 million, during the 10th Malaysia Plan submission.

"But it was not approved and the application was resubmitted under the third rolling plan," he told the state legislative assembly sitting

here yesterday.

He was replying to See Chee How (PKR-Batu Lintang), who asked on the status of the proposed project in order to avoid a recurrence of last Jan 5 tragedy when a female student, Kho Ying Qi, and petrol kiosk worker Herman Silas, drowned after they fell into a drain in Jalan Rock during flash floods.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Alfred Jabu said the state government had also requested for more manpower from the police force to be deployed throughout the state as it was aware that the force's various divisions were understaffed at pre-

sent.

He was replying to Ling Sie Kiong (DAP-Piasau), who asked if the force was taking any measures to improve the current 1:588 ratio of police personnel to the Miri population to 1:200 as determined by the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol).

Based on the Statistics Department's census for last year, Jabu said, Miri division had a total population of 290,274 while the police strength in Miri was 494.

Out of the total of 494 personnel, the traffic branch in Miri had a total strength of 42, being headed by a senior police officer with the rank of assistant superintendent of police (ASP), he said.

He also said that 100 Sarawakians were holding posts as heads of departments in the state civil service, of whom, 88 per cent were Bumiputeras and 12 per cent non-Bumiputeras.

He said this in reply to a question from Ali Biju (PKR-Krian). **Berna-**

