

75 flood mitigation projects nationwide approved this year

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KUCHING: Over 450,000 residents in flood prone areas nationwide will benefit from 75 flood mitigation projects approved by the federal government this year.

According to Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Datuk Seri Dr James Dawos Mamit, 38 projects were new while the rest were continuation from past projects at a total cost of RM621 million.

"The management of flood and related issues which are among the most threatening natural disasters in Malaysia is a priority.

"In fact for the five-year rolling plan (2011-2015), a total of RM2.21 billion has been spent for 121 flood mitigation projects," he said.

He continued by highlighting the 2011 flood which affected two-thirds of the nation - leaving 16 dead, 100,000 victims temporarily relocated, cutting off road access

and causing over RM1.5 billion in losses which was the highest in the nation's history.

Dawos, who was representing Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Datuk Seri G Palanivel, was speaking at the opening ceremony of the 13th International Conference on Urban Drainage (ICUD) at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCKK) here yesterday.

He later on expressed his hope that the five-day conference which will end on Sept 12 will be the platform for participants to share and formulate ways or ideas to solve drainage and flooding issues affecting urban and rural areas.

Earlier at the event, Joint Committee on Urban Drainage (JCUD) chairman Professor David Butler said the conference saw participation of more than 500 delegates from all over the world.

He added that the selection of Kuching in a way is bridging the gap between developed and

developing countries, and the conference is an ideal place to discuss water management processes of eastern and western countries.

"The conference will look at most recent ideas, methods, models, technologies, policies and current perception towards urban drainage.

"What might work or the best practice in one part of the world might not be applicable to another and this is where this conference plays its part to share and become a point to meet and discuss," he said.

Themed 'Urban drainage in the context of integrated urban water management: A bridge between developed and developing countries', the conference will see five keynote papers and over 300 technical papers presented and discussed throughout the five days.

Also present at the event was Department of Irrigation and Drainage Malaysia director-general Datuk Professor Ir Ahmad Husaini Sulaiman.



Dawos using the blowpipe to symbolically launch the 13th International Conference on Urban Drainage (ICUD).