

Double-tracking project firm checking flood-prone areas

BUKIT MERTAJAM: Seventeen low-lying areas near the Penang and Perak corridors of the RM12.5 billion Ipoh-Padang Besar Electrified Double Tracking Project (EDTP) have been identified as flood-prone areas.

MMC-Gamuda Joint Venture Sdn Bhd director Datuk Azmi Mat Nor said yesterday that 10 of the flood-prone areas were in Penang and seven in Perak.

Azmi said MGJV was conducting six flood-mitigation measures before the northeast monsoon hit.

The measures include maintenance of drainage systems to ensure waterways, culverts and drains are unclogged, cleaned and deepened; monitoring low-lying areas; setting up an emergency command centre and emergency response team in Penang and one in Kamunting, Perak; displaying data from meteorological stations on boards and providing information to emergency response teams.

Other measures include providing tractors, bulldozers and pumps in case waterways are clogged, and setting up an emergency hotline (1-300-80-1999).

"We are working closely with the authorities, federal departments and agencies on these measures," Azmi said near here yesterday.

The project is 70 per cent completed, with landmarks such as the Bukit Merah marine viaduct, the Larut and Berapit Tunnels and the new Prai Swing Bridge in advanced stages of completion.

The project, which kicked off in January 2008 and is slated for completion in December 2013, covers 329km of double tracks and is the largest ongoing infrastructure project.

The railway lines run across Perak, Penang, Kedah and Perlis. They cater to electric trains capable of speeds of up to 160kph.

Azmi said MGJV was conducting checks in flood-prone areas in its project areas in Kedah and Perlis.

"Apart from drainage mainte-



nance, we are giving extra emphasis on flood-mitigation plans this year after the Meteorological Department forecasted a higher rainfall than last year.

"The emergency response teams will be headed by senior project managers, who will deploy manpower and machinery when floods occur.

"About 2,000 employees in Kedah and Perlis will be mobilised and they will work with local authorities."

He said the company was monitoring nine low-lying areas and several rivers near of project in Kedah and Perlis.

In Kedah, the low-lying areas are Kodiang, Megat Dewa, Tunjang, Sungai Korok, Anak Bukit and Alor Star; in Perlis, the areas are Bukit Ketri, Mata Ayer and Arau.