

# Oman will build dams as protection against floods

June 22, 2008, 00:14

Muscat: Oman's Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources has outlined plans to construct a network of dams to regulate floodwater rushing through wadis (dry river-beds) that criss-cross the capital, Muscat.

Two sets of flood protection schemes are planned by the authorities with the aim of securing major commercial and residential areas of the capital from flooding.

Raging floodwaters triggered by tropical cyclone Gonu last year inundated some areas of the city, wrecking many roads and damaging infrastructure.

According to officials, the first flood protection scheme will be built in the upstream catchments of Wadi Adai, a riverbed that snakes its way through the capital.

When in full flow, the wadi disgorges floodwater into the upscale Qurum commercial and residential area of Muscat, and threatens other towns along its flow.

An estimated 95 million cubic metres of floodwater gushed down Wadi Adai when Gonu struck the capital last year, triggering major flooding.

Recently, authorities unveiled a plan to build a network of seven dams across Wadi Adai.

The biggest of these, a 20m high structure extending 6km across, will be built at the entrance to the wadi gorge.

A tender for the construction of this structure, named the Al Amerat Height Flood Protection

Dam, has now been floated.

The remaining six dams that form part of the flood protection system are in the design phase.

In the north of the capital, the ministry is studying plans for a similar flood protection system designed to protect populous neighbourhoods in the suburban areas of the city from flooding.

The goal is to regulate floodwater through Wadi Samayil, part of which flows through the capital en route to the sea.

### **Network**

As with the Wadi Adai project, authorities envision a network of multiple dams in the upper catchments of Wadi Samayil. An existing recharge dam at Al Khoudh will be strengthened to serve as a flood protection dam as well.

Although essentially designed for flood protection, both the Wadi Adai and Al Khoudh dam projects will also help recharge groundwater, say officials.