

Preparing for future shocks

REVOLVING FUND TO AID VICTIMS



TSUNAMI



LANDSLIDE



FLOOD



EARTHQUAKE

- Cabinet plans speedy assistance

- Experts to monitor climate changes

>> REPORT: P2 ● School's records damaged in floods: P11

Cabinet gets cracking on speedy assistance plan

NST 4/1/07

■ By Farrah Naz Karim and Deborah Loh
news@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: A revolving fund to cater for natural disasters and a study by experts on climate changes and its effect on Malaysia are on the cards.

The Cabinet which yesterday discussed the recent floods which inundated several parts of the country, voiced its concern about the level of preparedness of the various agencies and discussed remedial measures and speedy assistance to those affected.

Several ministers who spoke to the *New Straits Times* said the discussion was lengthy and the focus was that funds should be ready so that rehabilitation work following natural disasters could be carried out immediately.

Each ministry has been directed to ascertain its role, the funds needed and its strategic action plan before, during and after any natural disaster and submit a report at the next Cabinet meeting.

The government will ascertain the amount needed for the revolving fund once the data from all the ministries are received.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said the minis-

ters were told that although relief efforts in Johor were commendable, more efficient co-ordination was needed among agencies when handling such disasters.

He said among the remedial measures that government agencies should look into are how those affected by the calamities can get back "on their feet" immediately.

"This includes extending to them basic needs speedily and providing the people access to shelter, their businesses and other utilities," he said.

Local authorities have been directed to outsource waste disposal and cleaning up to private companies, if they are unable to cope.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Jamaludin Jarjis said the Cabinet had directed his ministry to conduct a study on climate change and how it affected Malaysia.

The ministry will hire local and foreign experts to conduct the study which will offer medium and long-term scenarios, in view of the changing global weather patterns.

The first study will be submitted within this month to the National Disaster Management and Relief Committee chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib

what do you think
OF OUR TOP STORY?
Tell us at www.monsterblog.com.my

Razak.

He said the series of studies would help outline the risks and allow agencies and the people to be better prepared for natural disasters.

Home Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad said civil servants in the affected states have also been directed to help flood victims clean their homes and public places, like schools, mosques or community halls.

He said the Cabinet had directed the Rural and Regional Development Ministry, Education Ministry and others to find the best ways to help flood victims within their jurisdictions.

"The public likes to blame the civil service for acting slowly. The Cabinet has directed all government agencies to redouble their efforts in alleviating the burden of flood victims," Radzi said after his ministry's post-Cabinet meeting

yesterday.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu has sought a RM130 million allocation from the federal government to repair federal and state roads.

Of this, RM40 million was for roads in Johor and the repairs would begin as soon as possible.

Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development Minister Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin said his ministry would look into rescheduling and restructuring loans under the various schemes so that those affected by the floods would not be overly burdened since they would have suffered losses.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Fong Chan Onn said he had directed Socso officers to give priority to claims by workers injured as a result of the floods.

He said Socso had already begun receiving applications on accident claims caused by the floods.



Floods in various parts of the country have led the Cabinet to voice its concern about the level of preparedness of government agencies.