

Tempers flare over coupons

Red tape at welfare office blamed

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KOTA TINGGI: While some flood victims here are fuming over the red tape they have to deal with to get aid in kind from the Government, others are thrilled to receive cash from a service group.

Tempers flared at the district Welfare Department office yesterday as hundreds waited for hours, even days, to collect coupons for food and other supplies, with the police called in to control the situation.

The coupons entitle them to 14 items – rice, canned sardines, sugar, tea, cooking oil, salt, soya sauce, condensed milk, Milo, plastic pails, mops, soap powder, brooms and brushes.

Flood victim Mazita Awang, 32, who is with the armed forces, said red tape was slowing down the distribution of aid.

"We don't care if you are short-staffed and we don't want to know what your problems are. If you have a good system, things should move smoothly," she said.

Victims have to first queue up to collect a number and then again for a coupon before going over to Dewan Koguna in Kampung Makam to pick up the items.

Driver P. Kunasaygeran, 49, who had come from Taman Kota Jaya three days in a row and was there at 7am yesterday, had yet to get a number at around 11am.

"I don't have my own vehicle. How often can I be getting lifts from people just to come and collect the coupon," he asked.

However, over at Dewan Ko-

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MAZITA AWANG,
FLOOD VICTIM

guna, where the items were being distributed, things were going well with an army of volunteers working together.

Mechanic Amir Hamzah Abu Bakar, 40, said collecting the goods went smoothly, unlike his experience at the welfare office.

Meanwhile, 525 families from Kampung Kelantan, Taman Kuso and Kampung Tembloh received a total of RM100,000 in cash as well as a bag of food items and toiletries each from the Rotary International District 3310 at the Dewan Jubli Intan here.

Even before the cheques for RM180 had been cashed, all of them had a clear idea of where the money was going.

General worker Mohd Nor Khairuddin, 33, said buying school uniforms and stationery for his seven-year-old son was his top priority.

"All this while he had to go to school in his regular clothes. Now I can afford to buy his uniforms," said the father of two.

Housewife Tan Mee Eng, 44, said she would buy a table, mattresses and pillows for her family.

"We lost all our furniture in the floods," she said.