

Perlis to seek Federal Govt aid for farmers

PADANG BESAR: The Perlis government will request for aid from the Federal Government to help farmers who have incurred losses exceeding RM12mil due to the recent floods.

Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Md Isa Sabu said they would bring the matter up with the Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Ministry soon to lessen the burden of farmers

whose crops were destroyed in the disaster.

He said the floods which hit Perlis a week ago had destroyed various crops such as padi, fruits and vegetables.

"We are only asking for compensation for the capital used to buy seeds, fertiliser and pesticide," Md Isa told reporters after visiting several agricultural areas

such as padi fields, farms and orchards in Kangar, Arau and here yesterday.

Earlier, he was briefed by state Agriculture, Agro-based Industry and Cooperative Development Committee chairman Sabry Ahmad on the extent of the damage caused by the floods.

According to Md Isa, losses involving padi was about RM9.7mil, vege-

tables (over RM2mil) and fruits (over RM344,000).

Perlis has 14,593ha of land for padi cultivation, of which 6,177ha are managed by 5,776 farmers outside the Mada area.

Md Isa said padi fields outside Mada territory contributed RM33mil every harvest season, while Mada areas contributed RM59mil. — Bernama

Help for flood victims

Special panel to register all those affected in Kedah

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ALOR SETAR: Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has ordered the setting up of a special post-flood committee to register all victims in the state to ensure aid is channelled to them.

He said the registration exercise would allow the Federal Government to identify the type of aid for them to rebuild their lives after the disaster.

The committee would be jointly chaired by deputy state Umno chairman Datuk Paduka Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah, Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Mohd Johari Baharom and Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Chor Chee Heung.

"If 40,000 people are affected by the floods, then the list should include all of them and their families. There should be one official list. The registration process must start now," he told newsmen after visiting some flood victims at the Sultan Abdul Halim Stadium here yesterday.

Muhyiddin said the list would be handed over to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to decide on the type of aid.

"Those who are entitled will get help to rebuild their farm or to earn a living," he said.

Muhyiddin also urged voluntary units and non-governmental organisations to help clean up houses, mosques, temples, schools and halls that were hit by the floods.



Heartfelt gratitude: An elderly flood victim thanking Muhyiddin for his concern at a relief centre in Alor Setar yesterday. With them are Ahmad Bashah (foreground, right) and Chor (standing, right).

On a similar note, he said government agencies must be on alert for the second wave of floods that could happen within a couple of weeks.

Muhyiddin, who visited several flood-hit areas in the Kota Setar district, thanked all the government agencies that had helped during the disaster in Kedah and Perlis.

"We have used government assets including lorries, boats and heavy

machinery to help rescue victims and move them to safety. The victims also received enough food and ample water supply," he said.

In **JITRA**, Bernama reports Mohd Johari as saying that a new mechanism would be introduced to speed up payment of compassionate aid to farmers whose padi fields had been destroyed by massive flooding.

"Some 26,000ha of padi fields

were submerged three days ago and may have reached 30,000ha by now," he said at the Kubang Pasu flood relief centre to welcome the Putra 1 Malaysia Club convoy yesterday.

Members of the convoy distributed aid to flood victims in Kubang Pasu, Jerlun, Padang Terap, Pendang, Kuala Kedah, Kota Setar and Pokok Sena districts.

Clean-up begins after a week of havoc

ALOR SETAR: Life is returning to normal in Kedah, seven days after the state was inundated with floods — the worst people have seen in years.

Many of the evacuees have returned to their villages to clear debris and clean their homes.

Life in the city continued with government offices reopening and businesses resuming operations.

The roads leading to the city — Jalan Sultan Badlishah, Jalan Teluk Wanjah, Jalan Stadium and Jalan Tunku Ibrahim — have re-opened to all vehicles.

The number of people at relief centres in Kota Setar, however, has increased to 21,116. They are mostly from villages and suburban areas including Taman Uda, Lorong Fajar, Kuala Sungai and Gunung.

Alor Setar MP Datuk Chor Chee Heung said that only a few small areas in the city were still flooded.

He said the places where the

water had subsided included Taman Lumba Kuda and Taman Golf. A state National Security Council spokesman said 9,531 people were still at 34 relief centres in Kubang Pasu while in Pokok Sena the number of evacuees had dropped to 1,003.

He said 242 evacuees from Pendang were still at one relief centre.

Meanwhile, the 28th kilometre stretch of the North-South Expressway that was closed since last Monday has reopened to all traffic. However, only one lane was passable on each side of the expressway.

The Sultan Abdul Halim Airport was still closed and would be opened the earliest by Saturday.

"We are still cleaning the runway and checking if the lights are functioning. The cleaning process is about 60% complete and we need at least five more days to make sure that the runway is ready," said airport manager Azmi Darus.



Accessible again: Vehicles travelling along a stretch of the expressway near Alor Setar which was reopened yesterday. — Bernama