

28,000 servicemen ready to help

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KUALA LUMPUR: The Armed Forces are ready to mobilise over 28,000 personnel in case of floods during the rainy season, said Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein.

The Defence Minister said a disaster management committee has been formed to coordinate rescue efforts to ensure that coordinated assistance is channelled to victims.

"We have activated the 'war room' to monitor the flood situation since Nov 16," he told a press conference at Wisma Pertahanan here yesterday.

Hishammuddin added that the Armed Forces were also ready to mobilise more assets, including 358

boats, 852 two-tonne trucks, 25 seven-tonne trucks, 118 ambulances, nine helicopters, a Hercules C130 aircraft, a CN235 aircraft and eight navy combat boats.

He said a flood relief collection centre for victims has also been prepared at the Defence Storage Depot in Sungai Buloh.

He added that the ministry has also identified National Service camps and the Wataniah Regiment camps as temporary shelters.

"A total of 52 camps have been identified as temporary shelters in states that are frequently hit by floods, which each camp capable of accommodating up to 400 evacuees," Hishammuddin said, adding that the ministry was also prepared to provide assistance to build or repair the

homes of flood victims.

In a related development, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said all government hospitals have been equipped with the necessities to face the flood situation and be able to sustain up to two weeks.

Speaking to reporters in Putrajaya, he said the ministry had placed its systems on standby with all the necessities to safeguard its hospitals against floods.

On Friday, the Meteorological Department issued red and orange level weather warnings for east coast states and Johor, where heavy rains are expected.

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