

PM makes on-the-spot grant

Floods—Kelantan

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gets \$200,000

By RASHID BAKAR

KOTA BARU, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today made an on-the-spot allocation of \$200,000 to help flood victims in Kelantan, the worst hit State in the country.

The Prime Minister said the Government might consider increasing the allocation should the need arise, adding that the amount should be within the financial capacity of the Government.

Dr Mahathir made the announcement when addressing flood victims at a relief centre at the Pahi secondary school in Kuala Krai, 69km from here.

There were all-round cheers by the crowd when the announcement was made.

Bakti (Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers) also donated \$10,000 to the State Government for the same purpose. A cheque for the amount was handed by Bakti head Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Ali to Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Mohamed Yaacob during a simply ceremony here.

Dr Mahathir said the Government was giving special attention to the plight of the floods victims as the situation was considered serious.

✓ Safer ground

He described the current floods as "extraordinary" as they hit areas which were not known to be flood-prone. Even houses on higher ground were not spared.

The Prime Minister said he was proud of the work of the officials involved in flood relief operations. They had carried out their duties conscientiously and effectively.

"If it were not for their dedicated efforts, the flood toll would have been much higher."

This was because those involved in the rescue efforts had taken pre-emptive measures in evacuating the people to safer ground.

However, he noted that at times their efforts were hampered because the flood victims refused or took some time to leave despite repeated advice by the authorities.

"As a result, there were unnecessary casualties."

Dr Mahathir advised the flood victims to act quickly when advised to evacuate.

Noting that more and more evacuees would be returning to their homes once the flood situation improved, he reminded them to be always vigilant against fresh floods.

He said the Government would provide

whatever assistance it could afford to help victims who lost their homes in the floods.

Dr Mahathir, who earlier visited several badly affected villages in Gua Musang, said the 40 families who were made homeless by the floods are now staying in camps and other shelters.

The Prime Minister and Dr Siti Hasmah were on a day-long visit to Kelantan for an on-the-spot assessment of the flood situation in the State.

Also in his entourage were Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, who is also the national disaster committee chairman, Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Mohamed Yaacob, Welfare Services Minister Mustafa Mohamed and senior Government officials.

In Gua Musang, the Prime Minister and his party toured Kampung Tiong and Kampung Limau Kasturi, the two worst affected areas in the district.

The entourage also visited the relief centre at the Puteri Secondary School in Kota Baru. The centre is housing 323 people from 56 families.