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Indonesia-Greg

INDONESIA OFFERS BUILDING MATERIALS FOR SABAH STORM VICTIMS

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Indonesia is prepared to give building materials like cement, timber, zinc sheets and construction equipment to help rebuild the homes of victims of tropical storm Greg in Sabah.

Information counsellor of the Indonesian Embassy here, Achmad Nawawi Hasbi, said his government was waiting for a decision on the offer from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"President Suharto had written to the Prime Minister asking what kind of contribution can the Indonesian government give," he told reporters at the presentation of a US\$30,000 (RM75,000) contribution from the Indonesian government to Information Minister Datuk Mohamed Rahmat today.

The donation was handed over by Indonesian Ambassador Jacob Dastor (Ed: correcting spelling to Dastor from Dastar in earlier story).

The Dec 26 storm caused massive floods which swept away hundreds of homes.

A total of 238 bodies, most of them Indonesian, were recovered up till last Saturday while about 100 people were reported still missing.

Achmad said the offer of construction materials was worth about RM200,000.

He said the Indonesian government had earlier donated blankets, clothings and food valued at RM10,000 while the South Sulawesi governor gave RM80,000 to the victims.

Asked on the small number of illegal Indonesian immigrants who took advantage of a Malaysian reprieve last month to leave without being prosecuted, he said the embassy could not do anything more to persuade them to go home.

He said the embassy had advised all Indonesians who entered the country illegally to take the Malaysian offer.

The number who used the opportunity was negligible perhaps for reasons such as not willing to pay the fine of RM1,000 to leave or they had wanted to use the cheapest way to return to Indonesia, he said. -- BERNAMA

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