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RM10m relief supplies for North Korea

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KLANG, Thurs. - The relief supplies to be shipped by the Social Action Initiative-Relief and Mercy Committee for the famine-stricken people of North Korea will not burden the country's efforts in dealing with the current economic problems.

The committee's co-ordinator, Datuk J. Jagadeesan, said today the goods which made up the relief effort were either purchased or produced locally. The committee, set up by the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of the Far East, estimates the value of the relief supply at RM10 million.

Jagadeesan said the weight of the goods was 7,000 tonnes, according to Westport Malaysia's figure.

This figure far exceeded the initial target of 3,000 tonnes, which he said reflected the generosity of Malaysians.

"This is an example of Malaysians' acceptance of the concept 'prosper thy neighbour' as expounded by our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad."

Jagadeesan was speaking to reporters before inspecting the loading of the goods prior to shipment, scheduled for Saturday.

The North Korean ship MV Myohyang which docked last Monday in Port Klang, will carry the shipment of food, blankets, clothing and medicine and is expected to arrive in North Korea in 11 days.

Jagadeesan expressed his gratitude to Westport which waived all dock charges, wharfage and stevedore charges incurred by the North Korean vessel which could have amounted to RM110,000.

He added that he would lead a nine-member team to North Korea on Dec 18 to conduct a nine-day monitoring mission for the relief distribution.

North Korean ambassador Kim Jin Ok, who was present, thanked Malaysians for their contribution and expressed his confidence that such goodwill should serve as a boost in the enhancement of ties between the two countries.

Also present at the port were SSSO president Cheah Woon Kwong and representatives of major contributors among whom was Ultimate Way Sdn Bhd operations director Richard Leong.

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