

Flying fire engines will be put to use soon

SITIAWAN Malaysia's first flying fire engine will be in operation in a few months time said Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh

He said the flying fire engine mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad were two Russian MI 17 helicopters to debut during the National Day parade in Penang

He said the ministry would receive the two helicopters each capable of carrying 36 firemen from Airod on that day and later send them for modifications

Apart from fighting fires the helicopters will also be fitted with other types of equipment to suit their multi purpose roles

These include rescue work in highrise buildings logistic and surveillance locating hot spots and even emergency flights he told reporters after opening the RM1.3mil Sri Manjung fire station here yesterday

Dr Ting said firemen had been trained and were prepared to use the helicopters placed under the Fire and Rescue Au Wing

Due to the economic downturn Dr Ting said the ministry had suggested that state governments get the private sector to build fire stations

He said it was suggested that the state governments provide the land the private sector build the stations and the Government supply equipment and manpower

Dr Ting said it was difficult for the Government to meet its target of building 60 fire stations under the Seventh Malaysia Plan during the present economic downturn