

Forces hospital to be one of the best

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LUMUT, Tues: The RM65 million Armed Forces Hospital here will be one of the best medical centres in the region with the capability to treat diving-related illnesses.

Among the state-of-the-art equipment at the hospital, opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday, is a RM5 million hyperbaric chamber, a decompression chamber for the treatment of problems related to diving and for cases that require oxygen therapy.

Its commanding officer, Brig-Jen Datuk Dr R. Mohandas, said the 164-bed hospital's underwater and hyperbaric treatment department is a national referral centre providing treatment to professional and recreational divers.

It also organises courses on underwater medicine for armed forces members and examining divers from the navy, Marine Police, Fisheries Department, Fire and Rescue Department, commandos, and Smart Team.

The underwater medicine

department is conducting courses on hyperbaric oxygen treatment for diabetic foot ulcer and cerebral palsy.

The department has received recognition from the Divers Alert Network as an emergency diving treatment centre in Malaysia.

Medical students from UKM, UM, USM, UPM, and International Medical University, and the Perak College of Medicine are also using the hospital for their training.

Mohandas said the hospital has grown from eight

medical officers and 80 paramedics to 35 medical officers and 470 paramedics.

Its facilities include an outpatient clinic, emergency and accident unit, surgical unit, orthopaedic unit, pathology, pharmacy, imaging, obstetrics and gynaecology, psychiatry and physiotherapy.

He said the "patient centred hospital" is committed to providing quality health services to all members of the armed forces, its retired personnel, civilian staff and their families.