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Najib-Medical

M'SIA SENDING MEDICAL TEAM TO AFGHAN REFUGEES' CAMP IN PAKISTAN

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 17 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will send a medical team from the armed forces to the Afghanistan refugees' camp in Pakistan on Sunday, Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced today.

He said the team would be escorted by an army platoon equipped with light weapons.

The 66-member team including 30 medical personnel would be headed by a lieutenant-colonel, he told a media conference at his residence.

Najib said the team is being sent following the request by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the Malaysian Armed Forces should send a medical team to help the Afghan refugees.

Najib said the medical team comprising a surgeon, anaesthetist, two doctors, 21 paramedics and other support staff would be able to provide outpatient treatment to 200 people and perform two major surgeries daily.

He said the team would set up an operation theatre, a ward with 18 mobile beds and 15 static beds besides laboratory, x-ray and medical store facilities.

The team would be stationed in Pakistan for two months and if they are required to extend their stay, arrangements would be made to send replacements, he said.

Najib said the team would treat refugees suffering from respiratory problems, skin and contagious diseases, intestinal tract ailments, typhoid and malnutrition.

He said the team is expected to depart on Sunday on two C-130 Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) transport planes.

He said Dr Mahathir would contact Pakistan President Gen Pervez Musharraf to get permission for the team to serve in that country.

"This is because the escort team will be armed with light weapons and hence, required permission from the Pakistan government," he said.

Najib said he could not confirm where the team would be based in Pakistan but it is expected to be in one of the refugee camps.

"Their actual location will be known soon," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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