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PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION FROM PM AND WIFE FOR AFGHANS

PEKAN, Nov 9 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali have contributed four boxes of goods to assist the Afghan refugees.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today their contributions were part of the 461 tons of clothings, food and medicines sent by the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) ship KD Mahawangsa.

"I received a call from Datin Seri at 7am today requesting for a lorry to pick up the boxes. They are a special gift for the Afghan refugees," he told reporters after presenting subsistence aid to rubber smallholders here.

The KD Mahawangsa set sail from Port Klang at noon and is expected to arrive in Karachi on Nov 19.

At the function, Najib who is also the member of parliament for Pekan presented subsistence aid from Risda to 120 subber smallholders in Kampung Paloh Hinai here who were facing financial difficulty due to the fall in rubber and palm oil prices.

A total of RM117,000 was given out at the function with each family receiving between RM600 and RM1,000 depending on the number of children per family.

Najib said government efforts to eradicate poverty since 1970 through the New Economic Policy had succeeded in reducing the number of poor people in the country from 58 per cent in 1970 to 12.8 per cent in 1999.

-- BERNAMA

ROS AO