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Johor loses over RM13m to floods

JOHOR BARU, Tues. - The Johor Government said the recent floods had caused losses of more than RM13.6 million, making it the worst ever to have hit the State.

State Secretary Datuk Ayub Mion released the figures during a briefing attended by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Pulau Spring Resort, near here, today.

He said 13,195 people were evacuated to 69 flood relief centres throughout the State when continuous torrential rains wrought havoc in six districts during the final week of last year.

Districts which took the brunt of the floods were Johor Baru with 9,239 evacuees, Pontian (2,681), Kluang (648), Kota Tinggi (413), Batu Pahat (204) and Mersing (seven).

Ayub said assistance given to flood victims included food, clothing, blankets, schooling necessities, repair of houses and assistance for affected small businesses.

The maximum financial aid of RM5,000 was given to Rahmat Abdul Wahid who lost his wife and three children when a mudslide swept away his house and three others at Kampung Seri Gunung Pulau on Dec 27.

Rahmat and other victims of the tragedy also received assistance in rebuilding their houses on a piece of land provided by the State Government at the same village.

Ayub said a grant of RM780,000 was also given to help 3,880 students directly affected by the floods.

He said the State Government had spent RM4.9 million to provide assistance to flood victims.

During the briefing, Ayub said the worst damage caused by the floods were on roads and bridges, causing more than RM4.1 million losses.

The damage on the forest areas was RM836,300, schools (RM603,000), agricultural production (RM7 million), land schemes (RM463,594), livestock (RM137,405) and health clinics (RM1.1 million).

Ayub said the floods were caused by the tropical storm "Vamie" which hit the State for the first time.

He said the continuous rain, coupled by clogged waterways and sewerage systems, particularly in squatter areas such as those in Johor Baru, caused the water level to increase at an unusually rapid pace.

The State Government has requested the Federal Government to provide an allocation of RM20.4 million under the Eighth Malaysia Plan for the implementation of flood mitigation projects.

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