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Mahathir-Treat

TUN DR MAHATHIR HELPS TO TREAT TSUNAMI VICTIMS

By: Hisham Abdul Hamid

BANDA ACEH, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- A tsunami victim from Desa Rabo, Pulau Nasi near here had a pleasant surprise when the doctor who was attending to his injured cheek was none other than former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir, who was visiting the Posko Pengungsi Seunaboh medical camp run by Aman Malaysia, had assisted Aman Malaysia volunteer Dr Mohamed Kassim to treat Maulidin Pakeh, 23, who was injured while saving himself from the tidal waves on Dec 26.

Dr Mahathir removed a mangrove splinter which had been embedded in Maulidin's right cheek for more than a month, before the wound was treated by Dr Mohamed.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, and Aman Malaysia Coordinator Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, who were on a three-day visit to the disaster struck region, visited the school which had received relief aid from Aman Malaysia.

He received warm welcome from the school's students who sang several songs specially for him and the other guests.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah also donated 400 pieces of prayer garments and 400 sarongs for those staying at the Posko camp.

There are about 2,500 tsunami victims including 400 orphans from 16 villages from three islands in Aceh, namely Pulau Nasi, Pulau Beras and Pulau Kerisik, who are being accommodated at the camp.

The Aman Malaysia aid team provided school utensils besides providing a medical centre and medical team to treat the victims. They are also providing a water pump and filter.

Dr Mahathir, when met by reporters, said the relief aid and volunteers from throughout the world should stay longer in Aceh to continue giving assistance to the victims.

According to him, this was because after visiting several areas which were badly affected by the tidal waves, he found that the situation was far worse than he had imagined.

"The areas affected are much more extensive than what I had thought earlier and they are all destroyed badly.

"So, I feel Aceh needs assistance not for merely a month or two, but for a longer term," he said.

In addition, Dr Mahathir said that apart from the reports and observation, he was satisfied with the assistance provided by volunteers from Malaysia such as those from Mercy and Aman Malaysia.

He felt that the Malaysian volunteer teams had performed their tasks seriously and responsibly.

-- BERNAMA

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