

RM250 mil fund for disaster relief
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Survivors of natural disasters can rely on help via the National Disaster Assistance Group Trust Fund, which has RM250 million in its coffers.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz said this in reply to Wan Hashim Wan Teh (BN-Gerik), who asked the government to state its willingness to set up a permanent natural disaster fund in view of the recurrence of natural disasters.

Nazri said the natural disaster management fund set up in 1957 was closed in 2005. The trust fund, which took over its functions under the Finance Procedure Act 1997, is now managed by National Security Division.

He said the main objectives of the trust fund are to assist those affected by natural disasters; sponsor programmes and activities related to disaster management; and assist state governments or agencies that do not have funds of their own.

"The federal government contributes the funds, but contributions are also accepted from corporate bodies and the public," Nazri said during the Question session in the Dewan Rakyat today.

He further said Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has directed the national security division to obtain and deliver logistical support, such as boats and helicopters, to district offices for use in the event of natural disasters.

"We are also considering setting up a regional godown where we can store equipment so that it can reach affected areas as soon as possible whenever we're facing natural disasters," he said.

Dr Wee Ka Siong (BN-Ayer Hitam) asked if the government has set a limit of RM3.50 per person in terms of financial assistance.

"This is the first time I'm hearing such a thing. We allocate assistance according to the victims' needs and we don't limit it to RM3.50 per person," he said.

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