

**PM launches Burma fund, aid team lands**  
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Prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today launched a fund for cyclone-hit Burma after Kuala Lumpur's aid team landed in Rangoon.  
MCPX

Cyclone Nagris left about 62,000 dead or missing in Burma, ravaging parts of the southern Irrawaddy delta and leaving millions homeless after sweeping through the country on May 3.

Abdullah asked Malaysians to donate to the fund being overseen by the Foreign Ministry.

"We help them on humanitarian grounds, there is no politics in this matter. When there are people suffering, we Malaysians always offer assistance," Abdullah told state news agency Bernama.

Meanwhile, a Malaysian aid team landed at Rangoon's International Airport on Monday, carrying RM500,000 worth of aid, Bernama reported.

The 32-member team included military, government aid workers and Malaysian Red Crescent Society members who brought blankets, instant food, medicines, clothes, water purification tablets and tents.

Malaysia's state media were also allowed to accompany the aid workers.

Aid workers not turned away

Mazlan Muhammad, Malaysia's envoy to Burma, said the team was encouraged to help and the military junta did not turn them away.

"A senior official told me the Burma government always welcomed such efforts," Mazlan told reporters in Rangoon.

He said the situation was "very serious" since water-borne diseases have begun to spread amid shortages of medicines, food and clean water in the worst-hit areas.

Burma's secretive junta has been criticised for refusing to allow foreign aid workers into the country to distribute badly-needed supplies.

The United Nations says more than 100,000 people were likely to have been killed, and up to two million people are said to have been affected by the disaster.