

No state of emergency in Johor

The Star - 14/1/2007

PM: Authorities to continue monitoring flood situation

By MAZWIN NIK ANIS
mazwin@thestar.com.my

CEBU CITY (Philippines): A state of emergency will be declared in Johor if the situation warrants it, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He told reporters here yesterday that the National Security Division (BKN) would monitor the situation in Johor, which had been hit by a second wave of floods, and would make the call if necessary.

"I will be visiting Johor once the Asean Summit is over. I will be going back on Monday and I hope to be able to visit Johor on Jan 16.

"I was informed by the BKN on latest developments in Johor and they have already put in operation its rescue and assistance plan," he said.

Abdullah said the relevant government departments and agencies were already in the affected areas providing all forms of assistance.

He said BKN had also deployed manpower and equipment from unaffected areas to assist operations in Johor, adding that operations there were going on smoothly.

"The Government already has in place an operation manual when facing this kind of situation," he said.

Earlier, he said Malaysia had no problems with having a sanction included in the proposed Asean

Charter as it will ensure the grouping becomes a rule-based organisation, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

He said that, for an organisation like Asean to survive, there had to be some "form of monitoring" or legally-binding provisions.

"I believe there should be some provisions to govern our actions," he told the media at the end of the first day of the Asean Summit yesterday.

The Prime Minister said the issue of sanction was discussed but stressed that there were "no violent discussions" held.

The Eminent Persons Group had come up with recommendations for the charter, which includes "some sort of penalty, including sanction and expulsion" of a member who failed to conform to Asean's rules.

"The charter will be the basis for what we would like to achieve in the future like an Asean community that is rule-based, socially-cohesive and politically-stable.

"And on the various type of governments, we can (come to a decision). This is what we call unity in diversity," he added.

The Prime Minister added that Asean wanted Myanmar to continue with its reconciliation and democratisation process even though there will not be a United Nations resolution on the grouping member.

He said Myanmar was not a security threat to the region or to the international community, hence there was no need for a resolution to be made on the Asean member.

On the Mindanao peace deal where Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had credited

Malaysia for its role as a monitoring group, Abdullah said he could not reveal the date for talks between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine Government, adding that the peace process was taking so long as it was a difficult one.

On another matter, the Prime Mi-

nister denied that Malaysian authorities were pressured by Cambodia to deport its former police chief, but confirmed that there were requests.