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Najib: No need to form RCI to review flood disaster

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KUALA LUMPUR: There is no need for the Cabinet to form a Royal Commission of Inquiry (RCI) to review the flood disaster management last year.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said there is no need for a RCI as the government, through the National Security Council (NSC), had carried out various efforts to help the flood victims in affected states, including Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Kedah and Perak.

The measures taken include:

- Allocating a total of RM787 million from the government and NSC for restoration works and welfare for the flood victims;
- RM800 million allocation from the government to repair and build infrastructure including schools, hospitals, roads and bridges;

- RM893 million allocation in Budget 2015 for flood mitigation programme;
- building stilthouses as high as 8ft for flood victims whose houses were destroyed by the flood on their own land;
- handing part of 1,000 low-cost houses to flood victims in Gua Musang and;
- providing RM500 to each family affected by the floods.

"However, the standard operating procedures (SOP) by the implementing agencies should be reviewed, studied and regularly updated so that they would be able to face situations including major floods and increase in water levels," he said when replying to an oral question by Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said (BN - Pengerang).

Najib added that several areas of improvement have been identified since the flood disaster, which includes:

- increasing the competency and

leadership skills of agencies and committees at district, state and federal levels;

- improving the flood warning system;
- increasing the assets and logistics for search and rescue operations, including high-powered boats, amphibious vehicles, helicopters; and
- flood mitigation in the medium and long term

He added that the government is studying several models for disaster management which are practised by several disaster-stricken countries.

Najib also added that all forms of development, including those in new development projects, mining, land clearing and logging, are to be carried out in a sustainable manner.

"Development which does not take into account the environment sustainability would bring great harm to us. That is an important lesson from this flood disaster," he said.