

PM: CUT RED TAPE FOR FLOOD AID

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'Flood victims who have lost almost everything shouldn't be burdened by bureaucracy'

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob has directed all government bodies to cut the red tape and ensure help is swiftly given to those affected by the floods.

He said flood victims who have been left with only the clothes on their backs should not be further burdened by "troublesome bureaucracy".

"I ask government departments, agencies and ministries to speed up aid for flood victims.

"Simplify their affairs. We do not want troublesome bureaucracy because they are already burdened. The government has allocated funds to help," he said after a *gotong-royong* event in Taman Sri Nanding and Kampung Dusun Tua here yesterday.

Ismail Sabri said the East Klang Valley Expressway (EKVE) project might have contributed to the flood in Taman Sri Nanding.

He said checks showed that the EKVE project had led to clogged drains and disrupted the drainage system, leading to the overflow of



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and members of the armed forces participating in a 'gotong-royong' in Taman Sri Nanding, Hulu Langat, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

water from Sungai Langat into residential areas.

The EKVE project had been blamed for a mud flood in Kampung Lembah Jaya Utara, Ampang, in November, as well as for muddy water in Sungai Klang.

Ismail Sabri said once floodwaters subside, deepening rivers and drains would be a priority.

"We can set up retention ponds and build retention walls along rivers."

He said the government would establish a flood management task force in preparation for a possible second wave of floods.

He said this body would ensure smooth inter-agency coordination in rescue and relief work.

He said Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali is heading the task force that would include other agencies, such as the armed forces, police, Fire and Rescue Department, with

the first meeting to be held at the latest today.

He said the task force was crucial as forecast showed there would be another round of heavy rain, which might cause floods.

He said the government was awaiting a detailed report from the International Trade and Industry Ministry on the impact of the floods on industries.

"In the short term, we want to help people with domestic issues,

like homes. People have lost their belongings so we're prioritising this."

On aid for the people, Ismail Sabri said the government would provide Bantuan Wang Ihsan to flood victims who had to move to evacuation centres as well as those who sought shelter with relatives.

"The government has allocated RM100 million as a start for the repair of homes and infrastructure.

"I'm sure this is not enough and we will add more.

"We will get a list of homes affected by floods from state or district disaster management committees and provide help as soon as possible."

He said Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) would provide a one-off 100 per cent rebate on electricity bills for December to ease the burdens of flood victims, benefiting 72,000 domestic consumers.

"I have asked TNB to help check the wiring of B40 homes affected by floods once electricity returns."

He said carmaker Perodua would waive charges on owners of its vehicles that were affected by floods.

He said the Finance Ministry would talk to other carmakers, such as Proton, on similar aid for flood victims.

The death toll from the floods stood at 47 yesterday, with five still missing.

Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Acryl Sani Abdullah Sani said Selangor had 25 fatalities, Pahang had 19 and Kelantan, three.