



A Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team officer coordinating rescue teams at Adana Airport in Turkiye yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF SMART

PM: US\$2mil for Turkiye, another SAR team deployed

PUTRAJAYA: The Malaysian government will contribute US\$2 million and deploy a second Special Malaysia Disaster Assistance and Rescue Team (Smart) to Turkiye to help in the search-and-rescue (SAR) mission.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday said this was being done due to the effectiveness of the first team, under the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma), which had flown to Turkiye on Monday night.

“The second team consists of 70 personnel. There are 20 each from Smart and the Civil Defence forces, and 30 from the Fire and Rescue Department.

“Turkiye is also comfortable (working with the team) and asked if we could add more SAR personnel.

“The flight (last night) is being managed by Turkish Airlines and this will reduce our costs,” he said after chairing the cabinet meeting.

Also present were deputy prime ministers Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, as well as Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Sabah, Sarawak and Special Functions) Datuk Armizan Mohd Ali.

Anwar said the Defence Ministry would also assemble a team of military doctors and paramedics to work alongside the Smart teams in Turkiye.

“They are set to build a field hospital that can be completed in 48 hours. However, we are still waiting for confirmation on whether there is a need for it in Turkiye.

“In Syria, assistance is more complicated because of flight issues and the prohibitive costs,” he said.

Anwar says the cabinet has agreed to donate US\$1 million, while the other US\$1 million would come from Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar.

He added that the Federal Territory Islamic Religious Council would contribute RM10 million for a start.

He said cash donations from Malaysians would be channelled to Turkiye as well as Syria, which would be done through the International Red Cross Society and the Malaysian Consul in Syria.

The 7.8 magnitude earthquake which struck the southern part of central Turkiye and western Syria on Monday has claimed the lives of over 8,000 people so far.