

# Permanent disaster relief centres to be set up

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Permanent disaster relief centres will be set up immediately, with pilot projects to begin in nine states, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said the initiative involves a ceiling cost of RM5 million for each centre, which would provide better protection for flood evacuees.

"The centres can also be (used) for community activities (after the flood season)," he said during question time in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

He was replying to Datuk Shamshulkahar Mohd Deli (BN-Jempol) regarding the government's plans and actions to improve basic facilities nationwide.

Replying to Shamshulkahar's original question about the government's preparedness to manage flood disasters and the northeast monsoon season, Anwar said an early allocation of RM241 million had been channelled to 164 districts in the spirit of Madani Malaysia.

He said pre-flood preparations have also been stepped up through community-based disaster risk management, adding that the Irrigation and Drainage Department has identified 5,648 flood hotspots.

"Maintenance works have been carried out, as well as activating the operations control rooms, forecast centre and flood warning system, which will operate 24 hours.

"We have also placed 73 mobile pumps at all flood hotspots nationwide, and upgraded flood

warning system and web camera stations."

Anwar said 66,169 officers and personnel from government agencies at all levels are on standby. They comprise the armed forces, police, Fire and Rescue Department, Civil Defence Force and the People's Volunteer Corps.

He added that the Social Welfare Department is also ready to activate 8,481 temporary relief centres, which can accommodate 1,620,855 evacuees nationwide. - Bernama