

**5,156 Evacuation Centres Readied For 1.4 Million Flood Victims - Muhyiddin  
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PUTRAJAYA, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- The Social Welfare Department has listed 5,156 evacuation centres that could accommodate 1.4 million flood victims nationwide, Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said today.

He said all agencies involving 28,000 members had been told to be on stand-by and to get ready the land, air and water assets.

Muhyiddin who is also Education Minister, said the Meteorological Department had reported that a number of states in the peninsula, and Sabah and Sarawak would be receiving 20 to 40 per cent more rain than normal between this November and March 2012 compared to last year.

"More flooding is expected this year compared to 2010. If our prediction is right, we have already made more thorough preparations this time," he said after chairing a special meeting on the flood preparations, here.

Muhyiddin said states expected to receive a high level of rainfall were Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Perak, Perlis, Kedah and Sabah.

"The high-tide phenomenon is predicted to occur on Dec 25 this year and Jan 23, 2012. The Federal Territories are also expected to receive more rain than usual," he said.

Muhyiddin said assets such as rescue boats, trucks, four-wheel-drive vehicles, helicopters, water pumps, power-generating sets and other necessary equipment were maintained well and placed at strategic locations which were close to high-risk areas to facilitate mobilisation for rescue operations.

He said the Drainage and Irrigation Department and local authorities had been asked to maintain the rivers and drains, especially in flood-prone areas, to prevent clogging during this wet season.

He also disclosed that the Education Department had activated flood preparations at schools in flood-prone areas, as well as the "Ops Payung" of the Malaysian Examination Board.

"The Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) examination halls will be located on the first floor of school buildings, especially in the flood-prone areas," he said.

Muhyiddin said 510 schools (96 secondary and 414 primary schools with a total of 201,543 students) used for the examinations had been categorised as being at high-risk for flooding.

He added that 2,459 schools in 120 districts would be used as relief centres for flood victims.

He said the Social Welfare Department had also created supply depots for daily necessities in five regions and 477 forward bases while its state offices had been stocked with food

supplies to be distributed to flood victims.

The Information, Communications and Culture Ministry as well as the private electronic media have, meanwhile, been asked to prepare information capsules to warn the public about flooding and the precautions to be taken.

Muhyiddin said the Broadcasting Department would provide slots to the Meteorological Department and Drainage and Irrigation Department to give weather forecast information and early flood warnings to the public from time to time through the electronic media.

He advised people in flood-prone areas to always be alert for warnings from the relevant authorities, not to wait for the last minute to evacuate and parents to be more responsible by watching over their children's safety during floods.

He said the government welcomed the involvement of volunteers and non-governmental organisations in managing the natural disaster, especially the operations at the flood relief centres.

Muhyiddin said the government also welcomed cash contributions from the public and private sector to the flood relief fund known as Kumpulan Wang Amanah Bantuan Bencana Negara to help lessen the burden faced by flood victims. The fund is coordinated by the National Security Council and Prime Minister's Department.

Muhyiddin then launched the National Security Council's flood information portal <http://portalbanjir.mkn.gov.my> which provides information such as weather forecasts and road closures due to flooding, and warnings on rising water levels of rivers.

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