

Government Has Set Up Permanent Secretariat On Post-flood Assistance - Muhyiddin Bernama
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KUALA LIPIS, Feb 5 (Bernama) -- The government has set up a permanent secretariat under the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) of the Prime Minister's Department to supervise all types of post-flood assistance, including the repairing and reconstruction of damaged houses in states affected by the recent floods.

Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the secretariat committee would be headed by the ICU deputy director, Datuk Ahmad Zaki Ansore Mohd Yusof in ensuring smooth and speedy execution of all assistance given either by the government or the private sector.

"The cabinet at its meeting last Wednesday decided that a permanent secretariat and task force be set up under the purview of the ICU deputy director and assisted by certain government agencies and departments.

"This is to enable all matters pertaining to post-flood are managed systematically and in an orderly way, especially projects involving the reconstruction or repairing of flood victims' houses, besides repairs to damaged infrastructure like roads and bridges."

Muhyiddin told this to reporters after handing out compassionate aid (wang ehsan) to flood victims at the Kampung Aur Gading hall, here, Thursday.

Also present were Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal, Works Minister Datuk Fadillah Yusof, Deputy Works Minister Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin and Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob.

Muhyiddin said previously, all post-flood operations were placed under the responsibility of the National Security Council (MKN) but due to the devastating floods which hit several states in December last year, all arrangements on post-flood assistance could no longer be done on a temporary or ad hoc basis.

"This is because all forms of assistance, especially repairs to damaged houses and the reconstruction of those destroyed will take a long time if not planned and coordinated properly.

"This is no easy task as certain things need to be checked and verified, including the question of house ownership," he said.

"The land involved for the reconstruction of houses need to be verified first whether they belong to the rightful owners, as a precaution to prevent any mistakes.

"Investigation and checking are needed, therefore, the formation of this secretariat will ease all operations," Muhyiddin said.

According to the records to date, he said about 10,000 houses had been reported damaged by the floods last December, out of the total of 2,610 damaged in Kelantan, while 35 homes were reported destroyed in Pahang.

"The permanent secretariat will also be responsible in appointing contractors which are accredited by the Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia (CIDB) in ensuring they build quality houses on time," he said.

Muhyiddin said the government had agreed to allocate RM5,000 to RM10,000 for the cost of repairing each damaged house, and RM48,000 to RM50,000 for building a new house.

Besides that, Muhyiddin said, as a mark of the government's commitment to helping flood victims rebuild their lives, the secretariat would also assist them to find sources of income, including restarting their business.

He said the private sector and non-governmental organisations that wish to channel their contributions to the flood victims could also refer to the secretariat to ensure the contributions were fairly distributed and not just focused on any particular area.

Earlier, in his speech, Muhyiddin said the government had channelled a sum of RM3 billion to the states hit by the floods to carry out restoration works, and this allocation did not include the costs of rebuilding and repairing roads and bridges which amounted to RM1.05 billion.

Muhyiddin also attended a briefing and viewed the flood-damaged Sungai Tenom bridge.

He then launched the construction of eight new houses for flood victims in Kampung Aur Gading after their previous homes located close to Sungai Tenom were destroyed by flood waters.

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