

Bomba Malaysia Prepared To Assist Indonesia Put Out Forest Fire

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 4 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department is prepared to assist Indonesia in putting out forest fires in that country which has been the main cause for the cross-border haze in the country currently.

Its Director-General, Datuk Wan Mohd Noor Ibrahim said the department was willing to offer aid if they (Indonesia) needed external support including from Malaysia to help in tackling the haze problem which was becoming critical lately.

"Usually, when a foreign country requests for help from our country to resolve a disaster, they will certainly contact our government beforehand.

"As such, we are prepared to help if the situation warrants, but it depends on the government itself because it will decide whether to send the fire personnel to join the mission to put out the forest fire in Indonesia," he said when contacted by Bernama, here Sunday.

He said the Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department had the complete assets and skills needed if the department was chosen to carry out the mission to put out the forest fires in Sumatera and Kalimantan.

"Forest fires are different from the normal fires because the forest is very big...it demands the security agencies to deploy all assets available to put out the fire because the operation is most challenging.

"In addition, the operation also needs the services of many personnel because it covers a very large area," he said.

As at 9am Sunday, air quality in most areas throughout the country deteriorated with several areas in the Klang Valley recording unhealthy air pollutant index (API) readings and one area posted a dangerous level with the API in Shah Alam at 308.

Yesterday, Science, Technology and Innovations Minister Datuk Madius Tangau said in a statement that the severe haze affecting the country since the middle of last month would ease briefly from Oct 6 to 9.

However, he said the haze would return on Oct 10 following a tropical storm forecasted in eastern Philippines if the fires in Sumatera and Kalimantan were not extinguished.

Commenting further on the haze situation which was of greater concern now, Wan Mohd Noor advised the people to stop any open burning activity to prevent the haze from becoming worse.

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