

Headline	Be patient, Sultan tells victims		
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Be patient, Sultan tells victims

FLOOD DAMAGE: Gives assurance that Pahang and federal governments will provide assistance in stages

T.N. ALAGESH

SULTAN of Pahang Sultan Ahmad Shah has asked flood victims to remain patient with the challenges they faced, following floods that hit districts in the state this month.

Describing the challenges as a "test by God", he said the federal and state governments would provide aid to families.

"I hope everyone (flood victims) will remain patient in facing these tough times.

"The victims will receive assistance from the federal and state governments in stages," he said after the launch of the statel-level flood aid distribution programme at the Al-Muttaqin mosque here yesterday.

Setting aside protocol, the ruler, who arrived at the programme driving a four-wheeled drive vehicle, was welcomed by around 1,500 people, mostly flood victims.

The sultan, joined by his consort, Sultanah Kalsom, and son Tengku Fahd Sultan Ahmad Shah at the mosque, mingled with elderly flood victims before being briefed on the aid programme by 1Malaysia Putera Club (KPIM) president Datuk Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim.

After presenting the aids comprising mattresses, pillows and stoves,

including a special RM250 aid for flood victims in the state, the sultan announced that Tabung Haji and the Sultan Ahmad Shah Environment Trust (Saset) will sponsor 50 individuals, whose homes were affected by the recent floods, to perform their umrah in Mecca.

The flood victims had extra reason to cheer when Saset topped up another RM100 for them, which entitled each family to RM350 in total.

Azeez, who is also Tabung Haji chairman, said KPIM had so far channeled flood aid worth RM4.5 million to Pahang.

Tabung Haji also distributed 10,000 headscarves and prayer mats to the families here yesterday.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob, who was also present, said flood victims at Tanah Putih here yesterday was the first batch of the RM250 flood aid recipients.

A total of 17,054 families in the state will be receiving the aid in batches. "The distribution of the flood aid might require some time and I hope the flood victims will wait for their turn.

"The state government will also find other resources to help the victims," said Adnan.

He estimated losses in Pahang to be around RM390 million, with

some 13,000 families suffering losses of around RM30,000 each.

The Armed Forces has obtained an additional asset in the form of a Czech-made seven-tonne Tatra lorry, following its efficient handling of the relocation of 38,323 flood evacuees in the east coast states and Johor early this month.

Armed Forces chief Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin said Prime Minister

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak had given the go-ahead for the asset.

The EC725 Cougar helicopter was also used in ferrying trapped victims during the floods.

The helicopter, which had no difficulty flying in bad weather as compared to the Nuri helicopter, is also used to fly flood victims needing treatment, said Zulkifeli.

MAF has deployed 395 officers and 4,000 personnel under *Ops Murni* in preparation to help victims in the second wave of floods, expected to occur soon.

Among the armed forces' assets mobilised under *Ops Murni* are four EC725 helicopters and a Nuri helicopter owned by the Royal Malaysian Air Force; two Fennec helicopters from the Royal Malaysian Navy; two Augusta aircraft belonging to the army's air unit; 50 assault boats, 30 three-tonne vehicles and seven Tatra lorries are on stand-by in Terengganu, Pahang, Kelantan and Johor.

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Sultan of Pahang Sultan Ahmad Shah presenting aid to flood victims in Tanah Putih, Kuantan, yesterday. With him is (left) **IMalaysia Putera Club president Datuk Abdul Azeez Abdul Rahim**. Pic by Halim Mat Ali