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Jakoa, agencies to deliver flood aid to affected Orang Asli communities

KUANTAN: The Orang Asli Development Department (Jakoa) will receive assistance from other agencies to deliver food supplies to Orang Asli communities who are cut-off by potential floods during the northeast monsoon season.

Jakoa director-general Datuk Sapiah Mohd Nor assured there will be no issues of delays or food supplies not reaching the flood-hit villages as all the necessary preparations were already planned in advance.

"Jakoa began preparations by appointing contractors responsible for distributing food aid since early this year and when the need arises, they will send out the supplies. The contractors will not only prepare the food baskets but also send the supplies to flood victims at traditional villages and resettlement schemes.

"Lorries will be utilised to send food supplies to villages where the roads are submerged while helicopters and boats will be deployed to reach settlements which are completely cut-off by floods or landslides...the mode of transport will be decided depending on the flood situation.

"During the recent floods in Kluang (Johor), Jakoa worked closely with the Fire and Rescue department and local council to send the food supplies by boat," she told reporters after the handing over of keys ceremony for the refurbished Paya Bungor Jakoa training centre here today.

At the handing-over ceremony, a symbolic key was presented to Sapiah by the contractor Felcra Bina Sdn Bhd. Meanwhile, Sapiah said when a certain Orang Asli settlement experiences continuous rainfall, the village heads, known as "tok batin", will make a request for food supplies.

"We have everything in place to face the floods and despite the setback to send the supplies, Jakoa will work closely with the other agencies to make necessary arrangements to ensure the food supplies reach those in need," she said.

She said each food basket includes essential items such as rice, cooking oil, flour, sugar, soy sauce and canned sardines, sufficient for a week.