

FOR PRESS:

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AUSTRALIAN RELIEF ASSISTANCE FOR MALAYSIA

The Prime Minister of Australia Mr. John Gorton, announced today that equipment to the value of \$A90,000 (\$M306,000) would be provided by Australia as relief assistance to Malaysia for reconstruction following the recent disastrous floods.

Mr. Gorton said the equipment would be in the form of two 100-foot prefabricated transportable steel Bailey bridges which would be used to help restore communications in the flooded areas.

The bridges would be supplied immediately by the Australian Army in Singapore.

The Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur was in touch with the Malaysian flood relief authorities to enable urgent arrangements to be made to move the bridges to the areas where they were required.

While in Singapore for the Prime Ministers' Conference, Mr. Gorton has had talks with the Malaysian Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak, about what Australian assistance might best meet Malaysia's relief needs.

The decision to provide the bridges followed these personal discussions.

In a message to Tun Razak on 6 January, Mr. Gorton had expressed distress at reports of the floods, and had confirmed an immediate offer of Australian helicopters and Dakota transport aircraft based at Butterworth to support emergency relief operations.

He asked Tun Razak to let him know if there were other ways in which Australia might be of assistance.

On 7 January, Tun Razak acknowledged this message welcoming and expressing appreciation of Mr. Gorton's offer of help.

In addition to the gift of steel bridges, supplies of blankets for immediate relief have been provided by the Australian Red Cross Society.

SINGAPORE
17 January 1971