

# HARRIS HITS OUT

# AT FEDERAL GOVT

SABAH Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh criticised the Federal Government for the lack of attention paid to the East Malaysia.

He said this had hindered the efforts of Sabah and Sarawak towards national integration. He, therefore, called for more Government participation in both these States to help in the development projects and to streamline development implementation machinery.

"What is now hampering our efforts to close the gap between us and Peninsular Malaysia is the vacillation and apparent unconcern in some quarters of the Federal Departments.

"Although a good deal has been accomplished towards achieving our objective of full national inte-

gration, I believe much more could have been done had certain quarters in the Federal Government been alive and responsive to the needs of Sabah and Sarawak.

"Some of the Federal Ministers 'are not visiting Sabah and Sarawak as frequently as they should. Regrettably, some Federal Ministers, for years, have not visited us, perhaps they do not depend on us for their political support," Datuk Harris, who is the Harisan Nasional MP for Ulu Padas, said during the debate on the 1982 Budget.

He said Sabah had to spend its own funds, "which it has built up through pragmatic fiscal policies and prudent financial management", on development programmes and projects "which

should, in fact, be the responsibility of the Federal Government"

"In the interests of national integration, we would like to see a larger, not smaller, Federal presence in our State and a fairer allocation of Federal funds for development.

"Indeed, we have continually urged the Federal Government to take over the operation of activities that fall within their purview," he said.

Datuk Harris also called for the "Federal presence" in land development programme.

He also criticised the deterioration of public services previously performed by the State but now taken over by the Federal Government.

"National integration must be for the better of

all. It should result in an improvement and not a deterioration of the administration. However, our unhappy experience is that the public services deteriorate whenever the functions previously performed within the State are taken over by Kuala Lumpur," he said

He cited the Sabah branch of the Federal Public Services Commission as an example of how the services had deteriorated.

He added that the Federal Government had not allocated enough funds for Sabah under the Fourth Malaysia Plan.

Datuk Harris said that the Budget tabled on Friday by the Finance Minister, Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, was in line with national aspirations.

However, he added that

the effects of the Budget had" only minimal benefits to the rural communities.

Encik Shamsuri Salleh (BN-Balik Pulau) urged the Government to take firm action against businessmen who were reluctant to reduce prices in line with the abolition or reduction of tax on consumer goods.

If the businessmen had been so swift in increasing the prices every time the Government imposed taxes on the goods, then they must quickly reduce the prices now, he said.

Encik Shamsuri regretted that the country had yet to achieve self sufficiency in rice,

He will continue his speech when the Dewan sits again on Monday.