

3 JAN 1996

Khalil-forest

ORANG ASLI COOPERATIVE TO EXTRACT FOREST RESOURCES

KUANTAN, Jan 3 (Bernama) -- The Pahang government today approved the application of an Orang asli cooperative to extract forest resources from 346 hectares of land in Raub.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said said the Pahang branch of Koperasi Kijang Emas Bhd would extract resources such as timber, rattan and bamboo from the Sungai Bel and Sungai Kelit areas in the mukim of Batu Talam which have been gazetted as Orang Asli areas, he said.

This would help the Orang Asli raise their economic standard as the cooperative would distribute profits among its members who are all of that community, he told reporters here after chairing a state executive committee meeting.

Khalil said that previously there were Orang Asli who did not make reasonable profits from extracting forest resources on their own because other people had used them to make money.

He added that this was the first time the state government had approved an application from a cooperative to extract forest resources.

After the forest resources have been extracted, the state government would, through Felcra, help the Orang Asli to develop the land for farming, he said.

On the candidate for the Lipis parliamentary seat by-election, Khalil, who is also the state Umno liaison committee head, said the matter should not be raised by party members now as it would be decided by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The MP for Kuala Pilis, Datuk Abu Dahari Osman, died of intestinal cancer last Friday. -- Bernama