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Law-EIA

STATES ADVISED NOT TO RUSH INTO INTRODUCING OWN EIA GUIDELINES

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 13 (Bernama) -- The move by several states to introduce their own Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations does not necessarily mean that the federal power vested in the Department of Environment is diluted.

Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding today said federal and state laws should complement each other and he saw no reason why states should not take care of their own environment.

"However, my advice to them is don't rush, do it properly," he told reporters at the Measat-1 launch celebration ceremony here which was attended by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He was commenting on newspaper reports regarding the move by Perak, Pahang, Johor and Sabah which intended to introduce their own EIA regulations.

Law said full consultation between the states and the federal government was needed before any new laws and regulations pertaining to the environment were formulated and implemented.

"We want to have uniformity as we don't want to create unnecessary misunderstanding or duplication of power," he added.

Law said the states could not take all environment laws under their purview.

"Should there be any dispute, the federal government laws and standards will be final," he said adding that state laws should conform with the national environment standards.

Asked whether such a move would mean that state governments would only approve projects beneficial to them, he said: "We can't jump to that conclusion. I hope they make good use of the laws they have."

Measat-1, the first Malaysian telecommunications satellite was lofted into orbit this morning by an Ariane 4 launcher from the European Space Agency Launch Complex in Kourou, French Guiana. -- Bernama