

27 SEP 1997

Haze-Sarawak

LIFE SPRINGS BACK TO NORMAL AS API TAKES ANOTHER TUMBLE

KUCHING, Sept 27 (Bernama) -- Sarawakians heaved a sigh of relief today as the haze situation continued to improve with the Air Pollutant Index (API) dipping to 127 at noon, from 190 at midnight yesterday.

Life was almost back to normal as the weather took a turn for the better in Sibu and Miri.

Although the API level was still in the unhealthy bracket, it was a big improvement for the state which at one time had the air quality breaching the 800 mark or way beyond the hazardous level of 301-500.

Random checks in various parts of the city showed that the people appeared to have put the haze emergency, enforced by the government since Sept 19, behind them.

Under the emergency declaration signed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, only the essential services were allowed to operate.

With the improving situation, the state Disaster Management and Relief committee relaxed the order of closure on certain sectors of the economy yesterday.

Although the government and private sector employees were allowed to stay at home as their offices operate on a minimum scale, most of them were seen back at their desks.

As today is pay-day for most offices, long queues could be seen at bank counters and Automated Teller Machines, mostly to make withdrawals. --

BERNAMA

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