

31 OCT 1997

Sabbaruddin

MASS MEDIA SHOULD STEP NO-HAZE PUBLICITY TO ATTRACT TOURISTS

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik today urged the mass media to step up publicity campaigns on there being no more haze in the country to lure back foreign tourists.

He said that although the mass media had been playing their role all this while, it was still not enough to reach the target.

Besides the mass media, the ministry also needed the cooperation of all relevant parties to lure the foreign tourists back to Malaysia after their number dwindled following the haze which had enveloped the country since July.

Malaysia could not depend on the foreign media to publicise the fact that there was now no more haze in the country, he told reporters after handing over a cheque for RM23,692.91 from Umno to the president of the Sarangbangun Foundation, Haji Edward Iblah Lim, here.

The contribution from delegates to the Umno general assembly last month is for the foundation which was set up to help orphans and widows of former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) fighters in Mindanao, southern Philippines.

The appeal for donations was made to Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the assembly by the foundation's representative here, Ali Mamat, who is a Bernama news editor.

Sabbaruddin, who is also Umno secretary-general, called on Malaysians to contribute to help these victims of war lead a better life and obtain full education.

The Sarangbangun Foundation based in Zamboanga City, Mindanao, was founded by Edward, a Moro social worker and former editor-in-chief of a local newspaper, to help about 10,000 widows and 50,000 orphans of former MNLF fighters who died in the 28-year armed conflict between the MNLF and Philippine government troops.

The conflict ended with the signing of a peace accord between the MNLF and the Philippine government in September last year.

Edward said the foundation was running out of funds which went towards organising activities like kindergartens for the orphans and loans to help the widows become self-reliant.

He said the foundation depended on donors like the "Safe The Children Fund Japan" which would be withdrawing the assistance next April after contributing about RM20,000 (200,000 peso) annually for health and education for five years.

He said the foundation spent nearly RM100,000 (1 million) a year on the social development programme alone. -- BERNAMA

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