

26 MAR 1997

Nik Aziz-Palace

NIK AZIZ TELLS THE PEOPLE TO FORGET THE PALACE-GOVERNMENT TIFF

KOTA BAHARU, March 26 (Bernama) -- Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat today asked the people to forget the row between the state government and the palace.

Although the row has been going on for over a year, the relations appear to have improved on a positive note, he added.

Nik Aziz said the state government had written an apology to the palace asking for him to be forgiven for any wrongdoings which had brought the wrath of the Sultan, leading to the misunderstanding.

In this respect, Nik Aziz confirmed that he would attend the investiture and obeisance ceremonies to be held in conjunction with the ruler's 40th birthday on Sunday.

"I will personally be present at the ceremonies to pledge my loyalty to the Tuanku and to deliver my speech," he told reporters after chairing the state exco meeting here today.

He also urged the people to join in the six-day celebrations by ensuring that all the programmes arranged are successful.

The state government had earlier allocated RM300,000 for the various celebration programmes.

On the one-day visit to the state by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on April 4, Nik Aziz said he welcomed the visit and would also be present together with other state dignitaries to receive Dr Mahathir.

He said Dr Mahathir's visit was important in strengthening the relationship between the state and the central governments.

During the visit, Dr Mahathir will witness the signing of an agreement on a petrochemical project between Keloil, a subsidiary of the Kelantan State Economic Development Corporation and KUB.

On the Monday demonstration by some 1,000 PAS members protesting against the Israel cricket team playing in the International Cricket Council Trophy tournament Kuala Lumpur, Nik Aziz said that was proper.

Meanwhile, Kelantan Umno Information Chief Datuk Zainal Abidin Abdul Kadir said the one-day visit by Dr Mahathir showed that the national leader was taking a great interest in the welfare of the people in the state.

It also showed that Dr Mahathir was not placing political interest above the welfare of the people, he told reporters after opening a workshop on action plan to combat social problems at the state level, organised by the National Unity Department here.

On Nik Aziz's recent description of Dr Mahathir's visit as a "blessing" for Kelantan, Zainal said this was a PAS political ploy, because it was so engrossed with its struggles. -- BERNAMA

ZI AR RM