

20 SEP 1997

Ong-haze

POLICE ON 24-HOUR STAND-BY FOR ANY EVENTUALITIES, SAYS ONG

KUALA TERENGGANU, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- The police have been put on 24-hour stand-by to face any eventualities should the haze get worse, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Ong Ka Ting said today.

He said the state of readiness was applied to other agencies under the ministry like the Civil Defence Department and Rela.

"Not only the police, the Civil Defence Department is also in a state of readiness," he told reporters at the Sultan Mahmud Airport, Kuala Terengganu here.

He was commenting on preparations by the police in coping with the haze which had reached dangerous level in some parts of the country especially Sarawak forcing the government yesterday to declare a state of environmental emergency.

However, he said they would go into action once they got the directive from the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is National Director of Operations.

Ong said also said application for leave for staff in agencies under the ministry would only be considered if they were for health reason or emergency.

"Under the situation, staff are not encouraged to take leave because of national interest," he said.

On the situation in Sarawak, Ong said that apart from law enforcement duties, the police had also been asked to render whatever assistance needed to help the public.

"We also welcome involvement of voluntary organisations to provide help should should the need arise," he said.

Ong and another Deputy Home Minister Datuk Tajol Rosli Razali were here attending the closing of a meeting organised by the ministry at Tasik Kenyir.

The meeting, which started on Sept 18 and attended by all divisional heads from the ministry, was to discuss policies and planning for the ministry.

Ong said the report of the meeting would be handed to the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. -- BERNAMA

SBS ATI ABG