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Abu-Beauty

SELANGOR VALUES VIEWS EXPRESSED ON ARREST OF BEAUTY CONTESTANTS

SHAH ALAM, July 20 (Bernama) -- Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Abu Hassan Omar said today his government viewed seriously the views expressed by various groups over the arrest of three Muslim girls for participating in a beauty contest.

He said what was important now was that information on the ruling that Muslim women were barred from participating in beauty contests be disseminated and the public be made fully aware of it.

Abu Hassan said this when asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad that he he did not agree to the way the Selangor Islamic Affairs Department (Jais) handled the issue of Muslim women participating in beauty contests.

The Prime Minister was reported to have said in an exclusive interview with the national Bahasa Melayu daily Utusan Malaysia that the arrest and prosecution would have an adverse effect on the affected people.

"God willing we will have a meeting with the Prime Minister (to give an explanation)," the Menteri Besar told reporters after opening the 9th Selangor Umno Convention at Hotel Radisson here.

"This matter is of concern to so many people and needs to be coordinated at Federal level so that problems will not arise over it," he said.

Earlier the state government had stated that it would bring the beauty contest issue to the attention of the National Level Islamic Affairs Council.

On the convention, Abu Hassan said the resolutions adopted were important as the federal and state governments viewed seriously the opinions expressed by the convention participants.

The convention was attended by about 2,000 people representing Umno divisions, voluntary bodies and non-government organisations.

Abu Hassan said the convention today discussed the "10 Pillars" which represented his commitment to lead Selangor to developed status by the year 2005.

Among the major items which made up the "10 Pillars" were full support for Federal projects in Selangor, balanced development, striving for greater understanding of Islam, stepping up skills training and restructuring of local authorities to safeguard the environment.

Abu Hsssan said he would also strive to overcome social problems, expand Malay Middle Class society, build more low and medium cost houses as well as small and medium level industries and modernise the plantation and agricultural sectors. -- BERNAMA

AZH AAM