

30/09/1997

Tackle problem aggressively, Hishammuddin tells Indons

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Umno Youth deputy head Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein today, in expressing his concern for the environment, said that while efforts were underway to expand use of forest resources, a neighbouring country was destroying it with the help of Malaysian companies.

He said while Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir was in Cuba working on expanding bio-resources usage, the forests were being destroyed elsewhere leading to the current haze problem enveloping the region.

Hishammuddin added as the Umno Youth deputy head, he must take stock of the current situation and would not hesitate to remind those involved to clean up their act in tackling the haze problem.

"If the Indonesians are not aggressive enough in tackling the situation, then it is my responsibility to remind them to do so," he said after launching the G-15 Banks for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants symposium at the Forest Research Institute in Kepong.

Asked to comment on the lack of co-operation for Malaysian fire-fighting efforts in the Kalimantan forest, Hishammuddin said if it was true, then he and Umno Youth would definitely be disappointed.

On Friday, 78 Malaysian firemen and six soldiers were waiting for the green light to get into Kalimantan to fight the forest fires, cited as the main source of the haze blanketing the region.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim had said that efforts were underway to seek a higher level of co-ordination from the Governor of Kalimantan.

Regardless of the cause of the haze, he said everyone should take a positive approach and find long-term strategies to eliminate it.

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