

19 JAN 1998

Kelantan-Consensus

FEDERAL AND KELANTAN GOV'TS AGREE TO DEVELOP STALLED PROJECTS

KOTA BAHARU, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- The federal and Kelantan governments today set aside their ideological differences and reached an agreement to continue the development projects that were stalled since PAS took over the administration of the state in 1990.

The agreement involving the 13 projects was reached at the inaugural meeting today of the Federal Government-State Government Joint Committee which was set up after obtaining consent from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the state executive council this month.

The committee was jointly chaired by Rural Development Minister Bandar Datuk Annuar Musa representing the federal government and Deputy Menteri Besar Abdul Halim Abdul Rahman, for the Kelantan government.

"We felt that good relations and close cooperation are needed at the federal and state levels to enable the people's projects to be implemented more effectively," Annuar told a news conference after the meeting.

Among the main issues discussed at the meeting was the ownership of land developed by the South Kelantan Development Authority (Kesedar) which had caused conflict and a power struggle within the state government, resulting in the case being taken to court.

"We will apply to court for a postponement or discontinuance of the case in efforts to resolve the land issue in Kesedar," Annuar said.

He said the state government agreed to give four of the 10 blocks of land to Kesedar while the technical problems concerning the remaining four were expected to be overcome in four months.

He said the committee also agreed that more housing projects be developed in the Gua Musang area, especially by Kesedar, with the preliminary step to give the titles to the house buyers.

On the Development Programme for the Hardcore Poor run by the Rural Development Ministry, he said its implementation after this would include Felda, Felcra and Kesedar.

The committee also agreed that besides creating several new settlements for the poor, the agencies concerned should give priority to the programme participants to own shares in lands or estates that had been developed.

"The initial target is to develop 3,000 of the 12,000 hardcore poor -- 1,500 by Felda, 1,000 by Kesedar and the rest by Felcra," he said.

He said the matter on the tussle for buildings constructed by the federal government, like public halls and markets, in Kelantan would be left to the district councils.

Both sides also agreed to jointly develop the Lojing highlands near Gua Musang so that commercial agricultural projects could be carried out.

The committee would also strive to enhance development in Kelantan through the Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand-Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), he added.

Abdul Halim said the decisions of the meeting would be brought to the state executive council for approval for the benefit of the people of Kelantan.

"Such cooperation is very useful for implementing various development projects for the people in the state, most of whom live in the rural areas," he said. -- BERNAMA

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