

24 JUL 1999

Assembly-Perlis

NO PLANS TO SEEK REVIEW OF BANGKOK TREATY

KANGAR, July 24 (Bernama) -- Perlis has no plans to ask the federal government to review the 90-year-old Bangkok Treaty although it had raised the border issue before, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said today.

He said because of the agreement, certain areas previously under Perlis had become part of southern Thailand.

The treaty was signed between the British and Siamese governments in Bangkok on March 10, 1909 to specify the land borders between Malaysia and Thailand, he said when replying to a question from Sofiah Ahmad (BN-Bintong) in the State Assembly.

Following that, the Anglo-Siamese Boundary Commission demarcated the borders from Kuala Perlis to Bukit Jeli in Kelantan between 1910 and 1912, he said.

Shahidan said Malaysia and Thailand also signed a memorandum of understanding on Sept 8, 1972 on border survey, and work began on July 6, 1973 and ended on Sept 26, 1985.

To a question from Datuk Selamat Saat (BN-Sena), Shahidan said the state government was drawing up the Perlis State Development Strategic Plan to improve the socio-economic status of the people.

The plan, expected to be launched this September, would give emphasis on industries, tourism, agriculture and education, he said.

He also said the average family income in Perlis was RM1,287.63 a month, and with income growth projected at 1.57 percent a year, it would be RM1,410.51 by the year 2005.

Meanwhile, Selamat also chided PAS for suggesting that Perlis pull out of Malaysia.

The opposition party had gone overboard by toying with this idea, he said when debating in support of a motion pledging support for the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Where would the Raja of Perlis be placed if Perlis were to pull out of Malaysia?" he said.

PAS had raised this matter without thinking about the future of the people and the state, he said.

When winding up the debate, Shahidan said the Barisan Nasional (BN) was confident that the opposition would not come to power, especially since it had made known its outrageous ambitions.

The proposal to auction the Putra Jaya federal administrative centre and pulling Perlis out of Malaysia were ambitions not acceptable by the people, he said.

Perlis was very dependent on the federal government to develop the state, said Shahidan who tabled the motion.

He said Perlis received annual aid of about RM450 million from the central government, including for paying salaries and development programmes.

The House passed the motion unanimously at the one-day sitting.

-- BERNAMA

AD YBY