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Mustapa-Kelantan

UMNO WANTS TO ENSURE HASSLE-FREE DEVELOPMENT FOR KELANTAN

JELI, July 24 (Bernama) -- Umno's main aim to wrest Kelantan from PAS was to ensure uninterrupted development for the state, Second Finance Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said today.

Under the PAS-led state government, it was difficult for the federal government to implement development programmes planned for Kelantan as PAS leaders blocked them, he said.

"As we all know, land is a big issue under PAS administration so much so several projects (by the federal government) cannot be executed at the early stage itself, even if they were implemented, it took a long time," he told reporters after giving out RM192,000 in scholarships to 715 students from 33 primary and secondary schools in the Jeli parliamentary constituency.

Each student received between RM20 and RM25 a month under the monetary aid programme jointly funded by the Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti) and Jeli Foundation since 1995.

Mustapa, the MP for Jeli, urged the people in Kelantan not to be influenced by PAS' propoganda that Umno need not rule the state because the Federal Development Department and Kelantan-born federal ministers would still be there to develop the state.

He said development projects for the people could be planned efficiently if Umno took over the state.

"It is true that I and Datuk Annuar Musa (Rural Development Minister) and others tried our best to bring in development but faced many obstacles," said Mustapa, who is also Entrepreneur Development Minister.

He also said a clear change of spirit were visible among the people in Kelantan following Prime Minister and Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's two-day working visit to the state which ended yesterday.

"The people seemed to be impatient waiting for the time to snatch Kelantan from PAS," he said.

He, however, said Umno and Barisan Nasional machinery must work hard to ensure the renewed spirit was also felt by the grassroots, he said.

Mustapa was confident the people would not be swayed by PAS' tactics to slander Umno and government leaders because everyone would know the truth eventually.

"The people can make their own assessments to determine the truth," he said.

He said PAS supporters have begun to feel fed up against the party's leaders following latest developments including the party's move to forge an electoral pact with DAP.

"They feel cheated by PAS leaders branding non-Muslims as infidels and some have left the party in protest," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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