

25 JUNE 2000

Dayaks

EDUCATED DAYAKS URGED TO HELP ILLITERATE ONES TO PROGRESS

SIBU, June 25 (Bernama) -- Educated urban Dayaks should not stand in the way of progress for the illiterate ones in the rural areas by passing negative comments and criticisms of government development policies and programmes, said Assistant Land and Rural Development Minister Datuk Gramong Juna.

He said those who gave such comments and criticisms would only serve to obstruct them from improving themselves and in acquiring a much better standard of living.

Speaking at a Gawai Dayak gathering organised by five Dayak area, security and development committees at Rh.Micheal Lias at Jerrwit Road, here, last night, he said when the illiterate ones opposed such projects, there would be no improvement to their socio-economic well-being.

They would then become frustrated and would vent their anger at the government for supposedly not doing anything for them, he said.

Gramong said educated Dayaks play very important roles in helping their own community to progress.

"Because of your background, comparatively better life, the rural community look up to you for advice and guidance over most matters. It is your responsibility to give them the best advice," he said.

He said, for instance, there were still a certain amount of confusion and misinformation among rural landowners over the government's intention to develop the Native Customary Right (NCR) lands for commercial agriculture.

The educated Dayaks could play a role here to explain and to correct them, he said.

Earlier, when launching the Sibu division's Teachers' Day celebration in Kanowit, Gramong urged teachers especially those in rural areas to acquire enough knowledge on computer usage.

When they were able to access the Internet, they could gather more knowledge which they could pass to their students.

"You will make for more competent teachers when you are skilled in the such usage," he said.

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OIC-Resolution

RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM NOT TO REPLACE IMF - SYED HAMID

KUALA LUMPUR, June 25 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's proposal to move a resolution on the international financial architecture at the 27th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers starting here on Tuesday is not aimed at taking over from the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today what Malaysia wished to see was both the rich and developing countries jointly make efforts to strengthen the world financial system.

" The IMF anecdote for the financial ills is the same for all. Some

will have to die as their complaints differed. Hence, we have to diagnose the other problems as well," he said over RTM's "Selamat Pagi Malaysia" programme today.

As such, in the formulation of the new financial architecture, the sensitivities and the prevailing situations should be taken into account, he said.

" We also need to consider capital flow, currency manipulations and regulatory requirements which worked against the weak nations that could not by themselves face the world financial giants," he said.

Syed Hamid said the conference would also discuss, among others, ways of changing the western perception that Islamic countries were backward and in constant conflict.

He said the conference would also delve into ways of ensuring that the Organisation of Islamic Conference-member countries became part of the respected international community and not seen as countries involved in frequent bickerings.

" They (West) always portrayed a negative picture...terrorism, poverty and backwardness. We have to change all these. We must be exemplary so that others will not hold us in bad light," he said.

Syed Hamid also said Islamic countries need not be wholly dependent on other nations because such total dependence would only cause a nation to be easily controlled.

" Hence, we have to determine our own future. We see that in West Asia, there are still issues which divide the countries there," he said.

Syed Hamid said Islamic countries should focus on their similarities and not on their differences to build on their respective achievements in various fields including in economic and political areas.

" If politics haunts us in our efforts to achieve success, we have to ease political tension and promote cooperation among us," he said.

He said it was Kuala Lumpur's fervent hope that the meeting would have frank discussions on these issues.

When asked by reporters as to how the OIC could be more effective, Syed Hamid said member countries must conduct self-appraisal to gauge their strength and weaknesses and tap their available resources for their common benefit.

" I think to suggest that the OIC has not achieved anything is not true unlike before, we know each other more now with increased cooperation among us, bilateral relations have been established and these must be enhanced," he said.

Syed Hamid said apart from proposals to enhance multilateral trading and a new financial architecture, Malaysia would also make suggestions on the advancement of technology and communication within the OIC.

Also, he said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's address at the opening of the ICFM meeting on Tuesday would touch on the role of the OIC and Islamic countries in the 21st century.

To a question, he said there should not be any doubt on the OIC'S capability to function effectively for the benefit of Muslim nations.

Some 1,000 delegates from OIC-member countries will attend the four-day meeting, the second to be hosted by Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur last staged the meeting in 1974.

The OIC, formed in 1969, consists of 56 member countries and four observer states including Bosnia and Herzegovina and Thailand.

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