

21 JUL 2000

Moggie-Unity

EXTREMISM WILL DESTROY COUNTRY- MOGGIE

KUCHING, July 21 (Bernama) -- Sarawakians should exercise moderation as any form of religious or racial extremism will destroy the prosperity and strong bond of unity built over the years among the races, Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia Datuk Leo Moggie said today.

He said the state and nation would only continue to see development and progress if the people exercise moderation and uphold unity.

"Relations among the various races and followers of the various religions must always be good and we hope this situation will continue to prevail and the people in Sarawak have a responsibility to ensure this," he told reporters.

He told reporters after opening the general meeting of the Sarawak Telekom Employees Association.

He said this when asked to comment on the statement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Wednesday that attempts were being to create a feeling of hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims in the country and this was taking place in Sarawak, which the government was monitoring.

"This feeling (of hatred) is at a level which can still be checked and I hope there will not be any action to make matters worse," Moggie said.

On the situation in Kanowit near Sibul where people originating from Peninsular Malaysia were said to be afraid to venture out to town as the local community resented them over the killing in Perak of soldier Mathew anak Medan by the Al-Ma'unah armed group, Moggie said he had yet to receive such reports.

Moggie, who is the MP for Kanowit, said he would go to Kanowit today to see the situation for himself and ensure there was no any untoward incident involving anyone.

"I hope nothing bad will occur and people will continue to maintain good relations," he said.

Meanwhile an officer with the Kanowit District Officer when contacted said no report had been received of any resentment against anyone.

-- BERNAMA

MT AHH AAM