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Incest-Opinion

CHINESE COMMUNITY LEADERS SUPPORT WHIPPING FOR INCEST OFFENDERS

KUCHING, April 24 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's suggestion to impose public whipping on incest offenders has received overwhelming support from Chinese community leaders in Sarawak.

One of the leaders, Kapitan Tan Tuan Yee of Kenyalang Park, here, said public whipping should serve as an effective deterrent to cope with the increasing number of incest cases reported in the last four years, 1,369 to date.

"The incest offenders should get the maximum punishment of public whipping should they be found guilty. They deserve the punishment for their shameless action on innocent victims who are their own flesh and blood," he told Bernama today.

Dr Mahathir was reported as saying on Monday that the government was willing to consider public whipping for those who committed incest if the people gave it the mandate to carry it out but he felt that the best defence was to inculcate the society with values and morals.

Another community leader, Kapitan Poh Tze Hang of Foochow Road No 1, said public whipping would be the best way to give the incest offenders a good scare before they even considered committing the crime.

"I give my full support to the prime minister's motion to curb the incest problem from worsening. Such inhuman act could only contribute to the country's social degradation. It is time to put a stop to it," he said.

Kuching Samarahan Division Chinese Association's Women Section chairman Lee Peck Cheng also lauded the proposal.

"Speaking on behalf of my fellow ladies, I agree it's time for the shameless offenders to be punished by public whipping. It would serve as a reminder to would-be offenders to think twice before committing the crime," she said.

She said, however, that family values and religion were still the answer to eliminating the root cause of incest.

Acknowledging that incest occurred among all races, Lee said that most Chinese incest cases went unreported due to the traditional belief of "saving the family's face".

Meanwhile, Sarawak Chan Clan Association secretary Chan Chiaw Yam said he concurred with the prime minister that there was no guarantee that stiffer penalties would stop offenders totally from committing the despicable act.

"I agree to stiffer penalties but I doubt that public whipping is the ultimate answer to tackle the problem," he said.

Chan added that the identities of the victims would be known if the offenders received public whipping, causing more psychological trauma to the victims.

-- BERNAMA

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