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Budget-Reaction/BM

SELANGOR TO HELP ACHIEVE BUDGET OBJECTIVES

KLANG, Sept 21 (Bernama) -- The Selangor government will play a supportive role in achieving the four-pronged strategy outlined by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the 2003 Budget yesterday.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo said today that to explore new agricultural fields, various strategies had been employed to raise productivity, especially in food production, to reduce imports in line with the Selangor Agriculture Year 2002 initiative.

"Modern and larger agricultural projects, like orchards and aquaculture farms in Kuala Selangor, are being actively pursued," he said in a statement, here.

He said the introduction of the "One Village, One Industry" programme could be successfully carried out in Selangor as there were more than 500 factories in villages in the state to act as the foundation.

He also welcomed the doubling of the size of the Special Tourism Fund to RM400 million in next year's budget in view of the importance of the tourism sector as a revenue earner.

In LANGKAWI, Langkawi Development Authority (Lada) chairman Datuk Zainal Karib Abdul Rahim said the government's proposal to look into making the island a registration centre of registration of yachts would further boost its tourism sector.

Langkawi's location away from the big waves made for an ideal yachting industry that could eventually change the face of tourism on the island, he told reporters after the launch of the three-day "Discover Langkawi" programme, attended by about 200 tour agents and journalists from Malaysia and Singapore.

"Lada and DRB-Hicom have built a yacht refurbishing centre which can cope with 200 yachts at any one time and is progressing fast," he said.

He said private companies, including hotels in Langkawi offered yacht docking facilities and other services to repair and maintain bigger sail boats.

In PETALING JAYA, the Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) urged employers to exploit aggressive efforts by the government to raise the quality of skilled labour in the country.

Its president, senator Zainal Rampak, said that with the allocation of RM1.62 billion proposed in the 2003 Budget, employers could no longer claim that they had no funds to train local workers.

"With such a big allocation, the ministry should prepare an action plan, an aggressive training scheme and employers should take advantage of this opportunity," he said after opening the 11th annual general meeting of the Airod Workers Union in Subang.

The Human Resources Ministry was allocated RM621 million to manage 29 industrial training institutes and skills training centres with 18,200 trainers.

Zainal said the MTUC was keen to see the ministry use up the funds for training of local workers within next year.

-- BERNAMA

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