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Councils-Tax/BM

TAX COLLECTION IS SMOOTH IN PERAK, SELANGOR, MELAKA

IPOH, Dec 21 (Bernama) -- Local councils in Perak, Selangor and Melaka do not have problems in collecting their taxes, the respective menteris besar said, here today.

Perak, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali, Selangor's Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo and Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam -- all who attended the Malaysia Youth Council's Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house at Dataran Ipoh said tax collections are effectively handled in their states. However, Tajol Rosli said the revenue collected were insufficient to cover the payment of salary and development of the councils itself.

"Only Ipoh, Manjung and Taiping are self-supportive. While, other councils need the state government's support because tax collections are insufficient to help them," he told reporters after the function. Tajol Rosli was commenting on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that several local councils were lax in tax collections, to the extent it had hampered development projects.

Tajol Rosli said although tax collection is efficiently carried out, the state government would ensure they exceed the 80 per cent target, as stated by the prime minister.

"If the total collections does not reach 80 per cent and if there is a short of revenue for the councils, the state government will not make up the deficit."

In Selangor, a special committee, established more than a year ago, had helped collections in the state, said Dr Mohamad Khir.

"Previously, Kajang was one of the councils that had problems, tax collections did not even reach 50 per cent. But since the committee was formed, collections has reached about 89 per cent. There are no problems with other councils.

"We have fixed a 90 per cent collection target for local councils, if they want to increase their tax rates. If not, we will not approve the tax raise because we do not want a large arrears," he added.

However, in Melaka, Mohd Ali said councils only failed to collect taxes from vacant houses and remote hotels.

"Overall, tax collections in Melaka is efficient and if there is any debt problems, the authorities themselves will be mobilised without any external support," added Mohd Ali, who is also the president of 4B Youth Movement.

-- BERNAMA

KAY VP