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Azmi-Dialogue

COUNTRIES URGED TO SET UP DIALOGUE PLATFORM FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 25 (Bernama) -- Countries represented at an international conference on poverty alleviation here have been urged to set up a dialogue platform on poverty alleviation.

Rural Development Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid, in making the call, said although there were other platforms to discuss various issues, still more dialogues would bring about greater benefits to the respective target groups.

He was opening the international conference on "Localising the Anti-Poverty Agenda: The Malaysian Experience" here today. Fourteen countries including the the Philippines, South Africa, Uzbekistan and Uruguay are attending the meeting.

He said many countries were turning to dialogues to address domestic or international problems.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had always stressed that any problem faced by two parties were best solved through dialogues and not through aggressive means such as military action.

Azmi said dialogues, such as the Smart Partnership Global 2003, Langkawi International Dialogue (LID), Southern African International Dialogue (SAID) and East Asia International Dialogue (EAID), had proved that through dialogues conflicting neighbouring countries could become friends again.

"Instead of fighting each other they can now sit together to discuss matters for mutual benefit. Leaders who are not in good terms can forget about their differences and shake hands.

He said issues concerning the eradication of poverty in the rural areas and various social matters, such as AIDS, would apparently be one of the major things discussed at such meetings.

On the current conference, he said it showed the Malaysian government's willingness to share its experiences in rural development and poverty alleviation with other countries.

He believed that the technical cooperation programme offered by Malaysia was a productive step to help participating countries develop their own rural development programmes.

"I hope that throughout the conference, participants will evaluate the success of rural development in Malaysia and pave the way for a similar or better programmes for your respective countries," he said.

-- BERNAMA

NER KHY AAM