

03 DEC 2003

Assembly-Terengganu (Winding-up)

MOST MEN PREFER YOUNG SINGLE MOTHERS, STATE ASSEMBLY TOLD

KUALA TERENGGANU, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- The state assembly was told today that most men in Terengganu prefer to take unmarried women or young single mothers with few children as their life partners.

State Social Welfare and Health Committee chairman Abu Bakar Abdullah said that reports from the Women Affairs and Communal Relations Committee showed that old single mothers with many children were not wooed because the men preferred to marry unmarried women and single mothers who were young and had few kids.

However, the PAS government gave an assurance to single mothers in the state that they would be better looked after in future, he said when winding up the 2004 state budget.

Yesterday, PAS state assemblyman for Paka Satiful Bahari Mamat proposed that the state government launch a polygamy campaign to help reduce the number of single mothers in Terengganu, which currently stands at more than 4,000, to ease their burden, especially poverty.

Meanwhile, state Youth Development, Petty Traders and Consumer Affairs Committee chairman Mohamed Abdul Wahid Endut denied the claim by Datuk Abdul Rashid Ngah (BN-Seberang Takir) that the purchasing power of the people of Terengganu was low after PAS took over the state.

He said the fact that two hypermarkets, Tesco and Giant, had applied to open branches in the state showed that the buying power here was still high.

However, he said that the applications were being studied.

Tengku Putera Tengku Awang (BN-Telepong), when debating the budget, said the PAS government should prepare two budgets for the state in future -- one which includes the royalties from petroleum and one which does not -- for better planning.

"With two budgets we can see how the state government will plan if there are royalties and also if there is none...but sadly, every year the PAS government includes the royalties as revenue.

"For me, it's not a realistic budget," he said.

He also expressed regret that Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang did not try to be friendly every time Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi visited the state.

He said there was nothing wrong for the Menteri Besar of Terengganu to welcome the prime minister, who visited the state nearly every month, as this would foster cooperation between the two parties.

Datuk Abdul Rashid Ngah (BN-Seberang Takir) said Abdul Hadi's speech when presenting the budget two days ago praising former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his services to the nation was not sincere, judging from the tone and the contents of the budget.

Hadi's congratulatory speech to Abdullah on his appointment as prime minister was also insincere because it placed a condition on Abdullah to set up Islamic syariah as demanded by PAS or face opposition from Hadi, Abdul Rashid said.

The assembly will sit again tomorrow.

-- BERNAMA

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