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Chan-Bonus

SARAWAK YET TO DECIDE ON HALF MONTH'S BONUS

KUCHING, May 26 (Bernama) -- The Sarawak government has yet to decide whether to pay a half-month bonus for its 20,000 civil servants, said Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr George Chan today.

Dr Chan who is the Sarawak Finance and Public Utilities Minister said he will discuss the matter with the state cabinet as its approval was needed before the bonus can be paid.

"Normally we follow the federal government but we have not decided on it yet," he told reporters here.

Asked whether pensioners will receive the same benefit too, Dr Chan said: "I don't know but normally we will follow federal (government)."

Last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad when unveiling the RM7.3 billion economic stimulus package, announced that a half-month bonus will be paid to the more than 900,000 federal civil servants next month.

Dr Chan who is also the Industrial Development Minister urged operators of Small and Medium Industries (SMI) in Sarawak to venture outside the local market.

He said it was time for the local SMIs to take up challenges with the implementation of Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) which resulted in the influx of foreign products.

"SMIs must acquire the latest technologies, get qualified people from outside and have joint-ventures with foreign companies to sustain the open market," he said.

He said if the local SMIs refused to do so then they will be unable to compete in the open markets.

Dr Chan said the federal and state governments have provided many incentives for the SMIs but it was up to them to utilise these opportunities.

-- BERNAMA

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