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Rungus-Seminar

SEMINAR ON FUTURE OF RUNGUS COMMUNITY IN JANUARY

KOTA KINABALU, Dec 5 (Bernama) -- A seminar to discuss the challenges, direction and achievements of the Rungus community will be organised here next month in an effort to place the Rungus people in the mainstream of Malaysia's development.

The seminar, slated for Jan 3, will be attended by graduates and professionals of the Rungus community. They will identify ways to improve the community's standard of living since the majority of the Rungus people still live in poverty.

The seminar's organising chairman, Datuk Markus Majihi, said there were approximately 150,000 people of Rungus descent out of the population of 2.5 million in Sabah.

He stressed that the Rungus community needed to review their contributions and achievements towards the development of the State and country.

"There are certain challenges and obstacles which must be analysed now because there is still a lot of room for improvement for the Rungus people in terms of their participation in the country's development in the future," he told Bernama here today.

According to him, although a large number of Rungus people had managed to escape poverty, an even higher number was still categorised as poverty-stricken.

Markus added that the mid-term review of the Eighth Malaysia Plan, tabled by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Oct 30, showed that the Rungus community remained among the poorest minority group in the country.

Apart from the Rungus community, other minority ethnic groups which are in the poverty-stricken category are the indigenous people of Peninsular Malaysia, the Suluk and Sungai communities in Sabah and Penan and Kenyah communities in Sarawak.

"As a Rungus, we are alarmed, challenged and we need to take up the responsibility of assisting the Government and the community to overcome the existing poverty issue," said Markus, who is also a former Assistant Minister for Social Services and former Matunggong State Assemblyman.

The seminar is open to anyone interested in the development and progress of the Rungus community.

The seminar will use Bahasa Malaysia, English and the Rungus language as the medium of communication where the guest speakers will present three working papers on socio-economics; politics and Government administration; and education and culture.

According to Markus, Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman will officially open the seminar.

Inquiries can be directed to the seminar's secretariat at Malaysian Seminar Services, Taman Soon Kiong, Jalan Kolam, via telephone 088-238860, fax 088-234860 or by contacting Jusni Ondilik at 019-8427919 or e-mail [runguseminar@yahoo.com](mailto:runguseminar@yahoo.com)

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