

500,000 Rela Members Targetted in Sarawak by 2018 - Ahmad Zahid

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MARUDI, May 6 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi hopes the number of RELA members in Sarawak will increase from 342,000 to 500,000 in two years.

In line with their role as front liners to safeguard peace, harmony and security of the people, the government had always provided assistance and encouraged their participation.

Various forms of allocation has been provided for the agency at state level, including an allocation of RM8 million approved by himself and Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem plus an additional RM20 million allocated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak recently.

"Not only that,'Tok Nan' has also approved 38 acres of land for building a RELA training centre," he said after meeting about 3,000 RELA members here Friday.

Also present were RELA director-general Datuk Kamariah Mohd Noah, BN candidate for Marudi, Datuk Dr Penguang Manggil and incumbent Datuk Sylvester Entri Muran.

Ahmad Zahid also clarified that money received by RELA members which went viral on social media that it was political bribery, was actually their allowance which they are entitled to.

The Deputy Prime Minister said a uniformed body like RELA is entitled to receive allowances automatically.

"We did a programme at the Borneo Convention recently and some claimed the Barisan Nasional gave them money to vote...but those wearing RELA uniform are entitled to their allowance and that was the money paid to them, it was not money to buy votes," he said.

Ahmad Zahid who met voters in Marudi said six requests put forward by the people of Marudi through their head would be submitted to the Prime Minister for consideration.

The request put forward by the people is to build a Waterfront to host the Baram Regatta, a multi-purpose hall, mosque, repair a temple, hospital and Muslim cemetery.

In the Sarawak election which will see voters going to the polls tomorrow, Dr Penguang will face PKR's Elia Bit and Independent candidate Luois Jalong for the Marudi seat.

In 2011, Sylvester won the seat by a 3,202 vote majority in a four-cornered fight against candidates from PKR, SNAP and Independent.

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