

Efforts being made to eliminate poverty: Max

KOTA MARUDU: Efforts are being made to eliminate absolute poverty at district level, especially those categorised as the poorest in Malaysia.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Sabah and Sarawak Affairs) Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili said the Poverty Unit is expected to be set up at the State and National levels to eliminate hardcore poverty by 2025.

"The Prime Minister's Department (Economy) is formulating the Poverty Unit under the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) to coordinate policy matters on poverty alleviation at the national level.

"On our side (Kota Marudu), we are ready to work with the special unit to eliminate the hardcore poor and poor from the category," he said during the joint Parti Bersatu Sabah Bandau 36th and 37th Annual General Meeting held over the weekend.

The Kota Marudu Member of Parliament added that a similar approach should be carried out by the State Government under its Sabah Maju Jaya programme.

"We can promote agriculture, such as coconut and (durian) musang king planting, which are among the crops with great potential for market," he said.

In 2020, **the Statistics Department** indicated that the national poverty rate stood at 5.6 per cent while in Sabah, it was 19.5 per cent.

Ongkili said efforts are also undertaken to correct the perception adding that the Sabah and Sarawak Division (BHESS) is currently collecting data to get right input on the poverty rate in Sabah to be included in national database.

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