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Tajuk : **ANGKASA : Place co-operative portfolio under suitable ministry**

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Dr Mohd Azlan Yahya (file photo)

JITRA, Aug 11 (Bernama) – The Malaysian National Cooperative Movement (ANGKASA), a body representing the cooperative movement throughout the country, urged the government to place the co-operatives's portfolio in any appropriate ministry as soon as possible.

Angkasa vice-president (Finance and Integrity) Dr Mohd Azlan Yahya said this was to enable the cooperatives' body to move and plan to bring about social and economic impact to the nearly seven million of its members representing 20 per cent of the nation's current population.

"We cannot get involved in policies yet because we' are akin to not having a 'father', so it's important for the cooperative movement to have a specific ministry with co-operative functions. Hope the government will make a more accurate decision as to where the cooperative is supposed to be," he said after officiating the Weight Management Seminar here today.

Previously, the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs was known as the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism during the BN administration, but was changed after Pakatan Harapan took over the government after the 14th General Election.

Azlan said the move was also to ensure the cooperative movement had the appropriate platform and channel to provide any proposal relating to cooperative development to the government as they currently only had the Cooperatives Societies Commission Of Malaysia as a reference point.

Meanwhile, Azlan urged the government to recognise the cooperatives as being under the Small and Medium Business (SME) category as 97 per cent of the cooperative business activities in the country operated on moderate, small and micro levels.

"The government allocation is only given to SMEs. So, if the cooperatives are not recognised as SMEs, they cannot benefit from business capital, grants and government assistance thus making the scope of cooperative development limited.

The programme, organised by the State Angkasa Liaison Committee in collaboration with the Mahsuri Medical Centre, and attended by 80 cooperative coalition members, was aimed at raising awareness on the health of members of the cooperatives to remain in good condition and free of obesity.

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