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PUBLIC INQUIRY SOUGHT FOR POS DIPANG'S TRAGEDY

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- The National Conference of the Malaysian Indigenous People and Land Rights has called for a public inquiry to determine the cause of the recent mudslide at Pos Dipang Orang Asli Settlement in Perak.

In a letter dated sept 6 to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed, a copy of which was sent to Bernama here today, the 168 participants of the conference said the explanation given by the authorities was not convincing since no detailed investigation was carried out on the actual cause of the incident.

The participants of the two-day conference held here last week was represented by Jannie Lasimbang who signed the letter, copies of which were also sent to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Perak Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib, National Unity and Social Development Minister Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail and Orang Asli Affairs Department Director-General Haji Ikram Jamaluddin.

While expressing regret over the tragedy which claimed so many lives and substantial damage to properties, they feared the possibility of similar incident in other hillslope and riverside settlements.

"The public inquiry should comprise representatives of the communities and independent experts, and the findings made public," said Jannie.

They also wanted states to impose immediate ban on logging activities at hillslopes and identify settlements with high risk of mudslide incident.

-- BERNAMA

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