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Monitor NGOs and their sources of funds

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ATTEMPTING to ruin the country's good name and image by holding the Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor (II) was not enough for some non-governmental organisations.

Hardly had the dust settled, they were at it again, this time under the guise of a Tribunal Rakyat.

We are told that discussions are to be held pertaining to certain law and enforcement agencies notably the Malaysian police force.

Rightfully so, their actions received the sternest criticisms from the very rakyat these self-righteous NGOs claim to represent.

Saddened by such actions, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has advised these NGOs to stop baiting the government.

His call and warning to these NGOs were welcomed by various quarters in the country who believed that the time was right to now conduct a thorough and comprehensive study of certain NGOs, their office bearers, process of elections and their sources of funding.

Today, there are increasing allegations of foreign participation and funding of these negative activities by certain foreign funding organisations, especially those from the United States, Germany, Holland, United Kingdom, other European countries and Japan.

Some have relocated here and in Singapore after being told to leave China, Hong Kong and Indonesia in recent times.

Some NGOs take their instructions and supervision from abroad.

The issues usually raised by NGOs revolve around accountability, transparency, conflict of interest and public interest. However, by the same argument, how many of these NGOs are truly accountable, transparent and working in a spirit of co-operation?

Do they really have grass root support and are their own elections and decision-making processes uncontrolled by internal "Mafias"?

Rumours are rife of overstaying leaders who preach about the greying of the movement but manipulate the media and election processes for self-propagation, of academicians using the NGOs for career advancement, and of others who work in NGOs to rub shoulders with policy makers, for free overseas trips and awards.

Most of these NGOs are run single-handedly, endorsed by too busy presidents and their men. In return for their non-interference, they are reassured of re-election, media exposure and overseas trips by controlling individuals acting in self interest.

One is made to understand there will be another international conference in an Asian capital under the umbrella of Consumer Protection Laws this year.

It has been reliably learnt that several Malaysians will be attending the said conference. Some of them are academics, retired academics and NGO officials.

It is important that the Ministry of Home Affairs and our Wisma Putra officials monitor the said conference and the papers presented by Malaysians to determine whether they contain fabrication and lies to smear the country.

This year should also see investigation into all NGOs' sources of funding, their office bearers and election processes to prevent an absolute minority from disgracing the country and its people for self-interest and personal gain.

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