

AIDS council: Don't support Pasrah

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian AIDS Council urged the public not to support the newly-formed People's Anti-Homosexual Volunteer Movement (Pasrah).

Its president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir said hate campaigns by Pasrah would only inflame prejudices and make anti-social acts such as harassment of certain groups acceptable.

"We are particularly

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alarmed at Pasrah's intention to 'wipe out' homosexuals," she said in a press release.

"We hope Pasrah is not seeking to emulate the violent homophobia which led to the recent killing of a gay man in the US," she said.

Marina said although the council was not advocating homosexuality as a way of life, it felt that Pasrah's campaign was a "poor reflection of Malay-

sia" which is generally tolerant of peaceful diversity among its people.

"Campaigns to condemn and discriminate against any particular groups have never shown to bring any benefits," she added.

Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram) said that Pasrah's pro-tem chairman Datuk Ibrahim Ali's attempt to incite discrimination against homosexuals was a misguided

form of political support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"These political actions generate intolerance and hatred towards minorities within our community," its co-ordinator Elizabeth Wong said.

She said there was often a tendency to hoodwink groups of people to deflect society from the real issues that need to be dealt with.