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Memo on uplifting Malay status to be sent to PM

By **R.S. Kumar**

suren@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed: Barisan Bertindak Melayu (Malay Action Front) will submit a memorandum of recommendations to uplift the education and economic status of the Malays to the prime minister.

The 40-page memorandum points out the steps which the government can undertake to narrow the gap between the Malays and the other races.

Front secretariat head and coordinator, Datuk Paduka Ibrahim Ali, said the working committee set up to formulate and draft the memorandum took about three-and-a-half months to complete their task.

"While drafting the memorandum, many weaknesses were discovered pertaining to the education and economic standing of the Malays in the new economic policy," said Ibrahim.

He said the committee had devised strategies to overcome these weaknesses and that these are the areas the government should give importance to so that the gap can be narrowed further.

"All these recommendations also correlate with the steps taken by the government to tackle the imbalances between the Malays and the other races," he said.

Ibrahim, however, said the

details of the memorandum will only be released after it has been handed over to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I will write to the prime minister seeking a suitable date for the handing over of the memorandum," he said.

At the meeting, he said they will explain the misconception about the front's role and their intentions, to the prime minister.

Committee chairman Tun Ghafar Baba said they were unable to furnish statistics on education involving Malay students as none of the committee members are cur-

rently in the civil service.

He suggested that a registered Malay Education Action Front be set up to look into the education of Malay students from village schools and right up to tertiary level.

Ibrahim said that in the economics field, the committee focused on the imbalance of Malay participation in businesses and entrepreneurship, share acquisitions and the role of government agencies.

"For example, the Urban Development Authority had failed to achieve its objective in providing housing facilities to the Malays," claimed

Ibrahim.

He said the memorandum also calls on the government to address the problem of low wages and promotion setbacks faced by the 8.8 million Malay factory workers.

Committee member Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah said the committee is open to any kind of response when asked if their move will be criticised by certain quarters when the front held a gathering on Feb 4.

"If it concerns the welfare and interest of the Malays, I will be one of the first persons who will come forward to give my views," he said.