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Ghafar-Memorandum

GHAJAR PRESENTS MEMORANDUM ON ENHANCING MALAY ECONOMY AND EDUCATION

KUALA LUMPUR, May 2 (Bernama) -- A former deputy prime minister, Tun Ghafar Baba today presented to the Malay Action Front (MAF) chief coordinator Datuk Ibrahim Ali a memorandum on enhancing the economy and education of the Malays.

The memorandum, which a 20-member committee headed by Ghafar took three months to complete, incorporates views and suggestions made at the gathering "Tak Melayu Hilang di Dunia" (Malays Will Not Vanish From the Face of Earth) organised by MAF last Feb 4.

The 40-page memorandum would be made public after the MAF had forwarded it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said Ghafar at the presentation ceremony.

Providing a brief insight on the memorandum, he said the committee viewed the efforts to eradicate poverty among the Malays as the most difficult task.

On education, Ghafar said the committee had proposed an educational congress to find out the reasons for dropout among the Malay students.

"Even though we don't have the statistics, dropout occurs in education and economy based on information we received," he said.

Ghafar said it was also proposed that the congress set up a Malay education action body with subcommittees at the kampung level to monitor problems relating to education.

"We fear that if there is no permanent body to monitor educational development of the Malays, we will continue to lag behind," he said.

Tengku Razaleigh, a member of the committee, told reporters that the proposals made in the memorandum were to complement efforts carried out by the government.

"We hope that the government would give serious attention to each proposal," he said.

Ibrahim, meanwhile, said hopefully the memorandum could be presented to the Prime Minister in the middle of this month.

He said the memorandum would be printed and distributed to government agencies, non-governmental organisations, Umno leaders and institutions of higher learning.

Although many policies had been formulated to help the Malays, the MAF noticed that there were shortcomings in the monitoring and implementation of these policies, he said.

He cited as an example the setting up of the Urban Development Authority (UDA) which failed to do a good job in safeguarding the interest of bumiputera traders in the towns.

--BERNAMA

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