

25 MAR 2001

Solidarity-Memorandum

GOV'T URGED TO SET UP SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

KUALA LUMPUR, March 25 (Bernama) -- The People's Counselling and Service Organisation (PKPR), a non-governmental organisation (NGO), has called on the government to set up a Solidarity Committee at the state and district levels to promote national unity.

"Political parties, NGOs, unions and those involved in promoting racial solidarity in the country must be represented in the committee," PKPR said in a memorandum.

The memorandum entitled "Postmortem on the Kampung Medan incidents and PKPR recommendations for preserving prosperity and harmony in Malaysia" had been submitted to the offices of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo on Friday.

Copies of the memorandum were also sent to the media. The memorandum was drawn up following the clashes between two rival groups in several settlements off Jalan Klang Lama on March 8.

The memorandum, which was signed by PKPR president P. Gunaseelan, said it was time that the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development played a more aggressive and active role in promoting harmony among the various races in Malaysia.

"The ministry should review whether the programmes it had undertaken had achieved their original objectives," the memorandum said.

The 15-point memorandum also called on the government to set up a permanent committee on religion for non-Muslim Malaysians at the state and district levels.

The special committee should be chaired by a state exco with representatives from political parties, religious bodies and NGOs, it said.

The main role of the committee would be to identify religious issues and to overcome them through consensus.

The memorandum also urged that the allotment of low-cost houses to the people should be made in a transparent manner so that only those who truly needed the houses would get them.

The federal government was also urged to set up a special independent body headed by the Menteri Besar or Chief Ministers to ensure that squatters were allotted houses in housing projects.

-- BERNAMA

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