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OPPOSITION PARTIES PROPOSE FORMATION OF UNITY CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

KUALA LUMPUR, April 2 (Bernama) -- Four opposition parties -- PAS, Parti Keadilan Nasional (Keadilan), DAP and Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM) -- today proposed the creation of a National Unity Consultative Council (MPPN) to tackle issues on ethnic integration and national unity.

Opposition Leader Datuk Fadzil Noor said that as a nation with people of multi-races and multi-religion, every issue on ethnic integration and national unity had an effect on the lives of every Malaysian.

"However, there is no channel in the present society which enables Malaysians from differing ethnic backgrounds to exchange views on issues pertaining to national unity and presenting these views to the government and parliament," he told a media conference at the Parliament lobby, here.

Fadzil, who is also PAS president, said following the clashes off Jalan Klang Lama last month, the opposition parties felt it was appropriate for the government to tackle the racial problems by setting up an independent body that could assist and give advice and views on strengthening racial solidarity which was still weak in Malaysia.

Keadilan deputy president Dr Chandra Muzaffar, who was also present at the media conference, said the four-party opposition coalition would submit a formal letter on the formation of the MMPN to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad within the next couple of days.

According to the opposition proposal, the MPPN should be established under the Act of Parliament and given status and power as a constitutional commission which would be independent of executive supervision.

The Council's members, who would be responsible directly to Parliament, should be appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

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