

Hindu organisation: Protect rights of non-Muslims

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PETALING JAYA: The Malaysia Hindu Sangam has urged Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Government to protect the rights of the non-Muslims as enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

In its resolution, it said that non-Muslims were experiencing difficulties following the Government's recent announcement that Malaysia is an Islamic nation.

The organisation, at its 25th annual general meeting, also passed five other resolutions, including congratulating the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong on their recent installation. They also pledged

their loyalty to the King on behalf of the Malaysian Hindus.

In another resolution, it called on the Home Minister to urge the Immigration Department to be more liberal in the approval of visa for the recruitment of Hindu priests, temple musicians, sthapathis (Sculptors) and Othuvars (hymn singers).

The delegates also welcomed the Education Ministry's decision to introduce Tamil as a third language in primary schools during school hours.

They appealed to the Education Minister to extend this facility to secondary schools and make it compul-

sory for all Indian students to take up the third language.

The Sangam also called on the Federal and state governments, in particular the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, to ban the sale of samsu and other alcohol-based drinks in unlicensed stores and provision shops, which were easily accessible to children.

The meeting also called upon the Hindu Advisory Board to look into the problems of interpretation of the Hindu almanac (panjangam) and the different dates attributed to certain festivals and provide suitable guidelines for the Hindu community in Malaysia.