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PM to chair National Social Policy commission

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - A commission chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be set up to oversee the implementation of the National Social Policy (NSP), Deputy National Unity and Social Development Minister Dr Tiki Lafe said today.

The secretariat will be based at the Ministry.

Those sitting on the commission will be representatives from other ministries and agencies.

"The NSP will be the reference point for all other policies," he said after opening Universiti Malaya's Family Day.

He said that under the NSP, the human impact of all projects must be determined, that is, a social impact assessment must be done, before approval could be granted, if at all.

The NSP was approved by the Cabinet last week.

The details on its powers and membership are being worked out.

It was reported that National Unity and Social Development Minister Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman had said the NSP incorporated the nation's constitution, Rukunegara and Vision 2020.

"It is an umbrella policy formulated to guide the implementation and management of social development in tandem with the country's economic development to produce a progressive nation," Siti Zaharah said.

The policy will also take into account all aspects of social ills in the country that need to be addressed.

On another matter, Lafe said that racial polarisation in universities campuses was not as bad as had been reported in the media.

"From our studies, it was found that generally the problem of polarisation is confined to a few groups who do not want to mix with those of different races. Among 30,000 people, only some 70 to 80 people have this problem.

"However, just because they are not in the mainstream, it does not mean there is no racial harmony in universities.

"The situation reflects what is in our society, where there are minority groups who won't integrate with others."