

62 NGOs form new Malay economic council
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Sixty-two Malay non-governmental organisations (NGOs) today agreed to form an economic council to look into the economic position of Malays.

Malay Chamber of Commerce Malaysia (DPMM) president Syed Ali Alattas said the NGOs represented 60 to 68 per cent of Malay entrepreneurs.

The Malay Economic Council would serve as a platform where they would discuss and look into the economic interest of Malays and speak with one voice, he said.

He said the goal was to lift up the dignity of Malays and ensure their rights and roles as well as equal economic opportunities taking into account the country's multiracial society.

Presently, 60 per cent of Malaysians were Malays and if they were generally in the low income group, it would give a bad image, he said.

"Our economic position is very weak even though the country has achieved 54 years of independence. Our worry is the gap between the Malays and the non-Malays which should be avoided," Syed Ali said.

Meanwhile, the Malay Contractors Association of Malaysia president Mokhtar Samad said Malay contractors should be given guidance and assistance in the many projects under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

"The government should give opportunities to the Malay contractors in Malaysia so that they will not continue to lag behind," he told reporters after the council's first meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

For the time being, the DPMM is the council's secretariat.

It was understood that the council would arrange a meeting and submit a memorandum to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak.

- Bernama