

## **'Can women's minister help where Najib failed?'**

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**By Kow Gah Chie**

With former women, community and family development minister Najib Abdul Razak having failed to solve the problems of the Penan community, his successor must take up the challenge, says PKR.

"The government has ignored this matter for too long. A National Taskforce Committee was formed in 2009 to investigate the matter, but we did not see results.

"Najib Razak, who was also women's minister, failed to resolve this matter," PKR Ampang MP Zuraida Kamaruddin said in a press statement today.

Zuraida said the plight of the Penan women and the development of their livelihood was a national matter.

"The dilemma of the Penan women is one the government must take seriously. The loss of income due to massive deforestation and problems involving abuse of Penan women have fallen onto deaf ears," she said.

NONE On Tuesday a group of 36 NGO's representing the indigenous Penan community of Sarawak called on Rohani to speed up action to improve the livelihood of the Penan people.

The National Taskforce Committee was set up following a series of reports of rape of Penan women by logging workers in 2009.

The task force submitted recommendations to the government to combat problems in areas of sexual abuse, birth registration and citizenship, healthcare and education.

However the government is seen to have done little following the report, as the Penan have reported that they continue to face much hardship.

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