

Watchdog wants Dr M tried for 'mini genocide'
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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad and government authorities were singled out by a local human rights watchdog as being responsible for the racially motivated killings at Kampung Medan six years ago.

On the anniversary of the worst racial violence since 1969 which left six dead and nearly a hundred maimed over two weeks, the Police Watch and Human Rights Committee made an appeal to the UN secretary general Ban Ki-Moon.

The committee wanted the UN to initiate proceedings against Mahathir at the International Court or the World Court for allowing the 'mini genocide.'

"We hold the former PM Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Malaysian police and the relevant government authorities responsible for this Kampung Medan Mini Genocide," read a letter signed by committee advisor and civil rights lawyer P Uthayakumar faxed to malaysiakini today.

"As we have exhausted all other diplomatic and legal avenues locally we hereby appeal to your goodselves for the United Nations to intervene and initiate or procure a sympathetic state to initiate the appropriate proceedings at the International Criminal Court or the World Court or sponsor a UN Resolution to condemn this violence and censure Malaysia for this their severe human rights violations," it continued.

The letter was also forwarded to 30 US-based human rights watch groups.

"To make matters worse, the local mainstream media completely blacked out the truth on this tragedy."

The 10 square kilometre area of Kampung Medan is populated with Indians and Malays.

The racial attacks, apparently sparked off by a squabble between neighbours on the eve of a wedding, eventually descended into bloody violence for fifteen days.

Witnesses said resident Indians were victims of continuous targeted attacks, despite police cordoning the area. The government later described the incident as an isolated racial clash. Several residents have since countered this, some claiming many of the attackers were outsiders who were part of a sinister effort to destabilise racial relations.

Not doing their part

The committee said the Malaysian government did not order the police to "protect this minority community and in fact allowed the slashings and killings by the said mysterious mob from outside Kampung Medan to go on for 15 days."

Despite "scores of official police reports, appeals, memorandums, letters and protest notes" the watchdog pointed out that Attorney General, the Malaysian Human Rights Commission (Suhakam), the Parliament and the Malaysian Judiciary has not carried out an inquest.

It also said the incident was ignored by the opposition and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as it "merely involved a politically and economically insignificant minority community" and that "this community attracts no international attention or local/international funding."

"Up to date the record stands that even none of these opposition parties and apolitical NGOs has ever condemned the violence in Kampong Medan."

In 2002, one victim initiated legal proceedings at the Kuala Lumpur High Court against Suhakam for refusing to commence an inquiry but the Malaysian courts struck off this victim's application. An appeal was thereafter filed in the Court of Appeal in 2003 and which is still pending.

The watchdog also pointed out that no attacker has been brought to justice and victims have not been compensated.

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