

76 NGOs form council to defend Malay rights
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Seventy-six Malay non-governmental organisations today joined forces to form a consultative council, Majlis Perundingan NGO Melayu (MPM), to defend Malays right and Islam in the country.

Among them were Pertubuhan Pribumi Perkasa Negara (Perkasa), Majlis Bekas Wakil Rakyat Malaysia (Mubarak), Federation of Malay Students Association of Peninsular Malaysia (GPMS, Malay Professional Thinkers Association of Malaysia and Cuepacs, the umbrella union for civil servants.

Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali, who acted as the council's spokesman, said the council's role was to act as a shield against those who tried to question Malay rights and privileges, the position of Islam and and the institution of the Malay rulers.

"At the same time, we will also be a polite pressure group to the government not to shirk from its responsibility in upholding fundamental matters as enshrined in Article 153 of the Federal Constitution," he told reporters at the launching ceremony of MPM at the Sultan Sulaiman Club in Kuala Lumpur.

Roundtable on March 7

He said MPM members would hold a roundtable on March 7 to discuss the economic direction of the Malays following Prime Minister Najib Razak's announcing of the new economic model for the nation.

"We also hope to meet the prime minister before the new economic model is announced because we do not want Malay NGOs to be "making noise" to voice their dissatisfaction over it... we want any policy made by the government to get support from all quarters.

"However, the government should also be proactive to Malay NGOs... meaning there should be give and take... if the government wants the support of NGOs, the government should also give due consideration to our views and feelings," said the member of parliament for Pasir Mas.

In MPM's statement circulated to media members present, the council asserted that its members must scrutinise each issue that had a bearing on the interest of the Malays, Islam, the Malay rulers and security and harmony in the country irrespective of who raised or questioned them and that they also highlight matters that are dear to the Malays.

Besides this, MPM said it would also prepare and implement an action plan to counter any provocation on matters that touch on the interests of Malays and Islam if they were construed as efforts by irresponsible parties to spread hatred.

- *Bernama*

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