

'PM must be Malay Muslim'

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UNDISPUTED: Accept the reality, urges reputed historian

KUALA LUMPUR

THE prime minister of Malaysia must be a Malay Muslim even though there is no article in the Federal Constitution which prevents non-Malays from holding the post.

This was because the majority of the country's citizens are Malays, said an eminent historian yesterday.

Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Kim said everyone must accept

the reality that Malays were the natives of *Tanah Melayu*, Malaysia's name before independence.

He said Malays formed the majority in the country.

"Even the British recognised Malaysia as the 'Malay States' before the country achieved independence.

"From a historical perspective, the highest rulers of the land before independence were Malay kings who were Muslims," he explained.

He was speaking after a guest appearance on the *Dalam Radar*

Khas (The Special Radar) programme titled "Democracy in Malaysia: Non-Malay Prime Minister" by Bernama Radio24 in collaboration with news portal Antara-Pos.com,

The other guests were Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah and Parti Keadilan Rakyat Youth chief Shamsul Iskandar Mohd Akin.

The issue of a non-Malay prime minister was raised recently by DAP chairman Karpal Singh, who stressed that for as long as he lived he would con-

tinue fighting to ensure a non-Malay held the post of prime minister.

Saifuddin said the issue should never have been raised by Karpal as the opposition leader was also a Malay Muslim.

"When the opposition itself chose a Malay as its leader, why bring up the issue of a non-Malay prime minister?"

Shamsul Iskandar noted that Malaysia adopted a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy, with Malays having special privileges compared with other races in the country.

He concluded that Malays should not be worried about the remarks in passing by the veteran member of parliament. **Bernama**

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Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Kim
historian