

 Wed, October 21, 2009 - KUALA LUMPUR: The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions (ICC) will carry out a special evaluation on the status of the Malaysian Human Rights Commission (Suhakam) from Nov 14 to 16, the Dewan Rakyat was told Wednesday.

Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Liew Vui Keong said that at the moment, Suhakam is an A status entity.

On that date, the final decision on Suhakam's accreditation will be made, he said in reply to R. Sivarasa (PKR-Subang) during question time at the Dewan Rakyat.

Sivarasa wanted to know the steps taken by the Government to ensure that Suhakam's A status would not be downgraded by the United Nations Human Rights Council for non-compliance with the Paris Principles.

Liew refuted reports of Suhakam's purported non-compliance, saying the Government had amended the Suhakam Act 1957 on two occasions to emphasise transparency in the appointment of Suhakam members as required by the Paris Principles.

We hope the amendments will satisfy the ICC on the steps taken by Malaysia to retain Suhakam's A status, he said.

Responding to Sivarasa's supplementary question on claims that a Suhakam commissioner was not allowed to visit the KL International Airport (KLIA) detention depot to interview some 200 Sri Lankan refugees on Monday, Liew said based on records, there was no application from Suhakam to visit the depot at that time.

Only UNHCR officers visited the place, he said referring to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.