

<p>Tue, November 17, 2009 - PETALING JAYA: Suhakam is neither an non-governmental organisation (NGO) nor is it a political party, says Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Khoo Kay Khim.</p><p>
Dr Khoo, who is also a Suhakam commissioner, said the body was set up by the Government under the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act 1999 to look into issues dealing with human rights.</p> <p>
♦It is not a political party and neither is it an NGO. Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud is probably ignorant since he thought Suhakam was an NGO.</p><p>
♦He is wrong,♦ he said yesterday in response to the allegation by Taib that the commission was disguising itself as an NGO and should register itself as a political party if it was unhappy with the state authorities♦ treatment of the Penan people and the environment.</p><p>
He added that Malaysia was a member of the United Nations, whose Paris Principles re♦♦quired national human rights institutions to monitor violations of human rights and to advise the Government and other competent bodies.</p><p>
♦Suhakam will continue to pay attention to human rights issues in the country.</p><p>
♦There is no need to change the way it handles certain issues but perhaps there is still a need to explain to the public about us,♦ Dr Khoo said.</p><p>
On Sunday, Suhakam Sarawak commissioner Dr Mohd Hirman Ritom Abdullah also refuted Taib♦s claims and clarified that the commission had been given a mandate by Parliament to promote and protect human rights.</p>