

# IRC to find flaws in system

KUALA LUMPUR: The newly set up Institutional Reforms Committee (IRC) says it has been tasked with examining the present state of key institutions and laws and recommending necessary reforms to ensure these institutions are not subverted for extraneous ends.

To this end, the panel said it would consult extensively with all stakeholders and invite their active participation, reported Bernama.

"We will then present the recommendations to the Government through the Council (Team of Eminent Persons) with a view to reinstating the integrity of the institutions and promoting and enhancing the rule of law," the committee said in a statement last night.

The formation of the five-member committee was announced by the Team of Eminent Persons in a statement earlier yesterday.

The committee noted that governance structures had been gravely undermined and that "our institutions have been prevented from functioning consistently with the laws of the country".



Working together: The IRC panel comprises (from left) Vohrah, Mah, Mohd Arshad, Dr Shad and Ambiga.

"These shortcomings in the system need to be identified and addressed.

"It has also become imperative to appoint persons of unquestionable

integrity to lead these institutions," it said.

Chaired by retired judge of the Court of Appeal Datuk K.C. Vohrah, the other members of the committee comprise retired Court of Appeal judge and Suhakam commissioner Datuk Mah Weng Kwai; National Patriots Association president Brig-Jen (Rtd) Datuk Mohamed Arshad Raji; Tunku Abdul Rahman Professor of Law at Universiti Malaya Emeritus Prof Datuk Dr Shad Saleem Faruqi and National Human Rights Society (Hakam) president Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan. The statement pointed out that the rule of law was the basis upon which Malaysia as a democracy was founded.

"The rule of law is about accountability, just laws, transparency, open government, institutional independence, an independent judiciary, and checks and balances," it said.

Meanwhile, the Government's Team of Eminent Persons formed the IRC to help bring about "positive change" in the country.

The committee will report to the Team of Eminent Persons, which will then present the report to Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

In a statement yesterday, the Team of Eminent Persons said that while it was set up to advise the Government on economic and financial matters, economic reform on its own could not bring about the desired change unless accompanied by institutional reforms.

The Team of Eminent Persons, which is led by former Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin, consists of ex-Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz, former Petronas president Tan Sri Hassan Marican, Hong Kong-based tycoon Robert Kuok and economist Prof Dr Jomo Kwame Sundaram.

It was set up on Saturday to advise the Government on economic and

## financial matters during this transitional period. — Bernama