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KUCHING: The State's largest youth organisation, Saberkas, is proposing to amend its constitution with the view to re-organise its membership and the composition of its various committees.

Its President Datuk Amar Abang Haji Johari Tun Openg, said the proposed amendment would allow the administration of members to be based on constituency rather than district.

"The administration of membership is now based on district. Now, we want to change it because (the present) representation does not reflect the number of youth in each district as some districts have more members, while others lesser.

"Also, under the present system, districts in the rural areas cannot take part in those activities deemed relevant to the youth," said Johari. With the amendment, there would be 71 Saberkas branches in the whole state, he added.

"Apart from the Registrar of Society, all the 71 branches will have to register with Saberkas while units under each branch only have to register with (Saberkas) headquarters," he added.

Citing the case of Kuching (district), Johari said that it had more units than any other districts in the state. Many districts in the rural areas were not able to participate in their (Saberkas) activities.

"What we want is a fair representation so that every district can participate in all activities, and can truly call themselves members of Saberkas," said Johari.

A proposal has also been made to amend the constitution to allow for a 3:7 ratio in leadership composition; 70 % must be below 40 years of age to ensure continuity. The rest (30 %) can be of any age above 40 years.

Johari announced these at a press conference after a Saberkas Supreme Council Meeting here yesterday.

On the 3:7 issue, Johari explained that experienced members (leaders) must be there to lead the organisation, and groom the younger ones. There must also be young leaders around to be groomed so that they could take over from their mentors when the time came.

Other major issue discussed during the meeting included agro-entrepreneurship which Saberkas members should be involved in, Johari revealed.

"Saberkas has a piece of 200-ha land in Kabuloh near Miri, which has been divided into 35 lots to be rented out to members to undertake agro-based business. It is headed by an Exco member Datin Hajah Fatimah Abdullah.

"This project will be implemented this year. We have spent RM2 million to develop the infrastructure therein. We want the participants to

plant perennial crops such as vegetables and fruits which can be harvested in a shorter time.

"This is a pilot project. If the participants can prove themselves to be successful, then we will give them free land for agricultural purpose," added Johari, who is also Minister of Housing and Urban Development.

He said that 83 applications had been received for the 25 plots of land available for the purpose.

Another area that the Supreme Council would like to focus on was tech-

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nology, Johari revealed. For this, Saberkas would work closely together with technology-providing entities such as UNIMAS, MIMOS, and Mardi.

Saberkas would also like to get the right type of technology such as modern farming concept to enhance the agricultural sector. A committee member, Datuk Lee Khim Shin, has been tasked to oversee the project.

Saberkas Secretary-General Aidan Wing, and Deputy Secretary General Roland Sagah were among those present at the press conference.



JOHARI (second right) speaking to reporters at the press conference. Also present are (from right) Lee, Aidan, and Sagah.
PHOTO: RAMIDI SUBARI