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Ong-Firearms

NO PLAN TO LIFT NATIONWIDE FREEZE ON FIREARMS PERMITS

BANGI, Nov 30 (Bernama) -- The government has no plans for the time being to lift the nationwide freeze on the issuance of firearms licences, Deputy Home Minister Ong Ka Ting said today.

He said the government felt that lifting the ban was not a very urgent matter because there was no need to have many firearms around.

"It is not a very good thing if there are many people who own pistols and gun," he told reporters after launching the third Malaysian Civil Defence gathering at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, here.

The decision to freeze the firearms permits was made in April this year by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is also the Home Minister, following the arrest in Taiwan of Sabah businessman Datuk Alfred Chin for alleged arms smuggling.

Dr Mahathir had said that the decision was made as too many licence holders had not been taking care of their firearms and were losing them.

In his speech, Ong called for continued public support for the Malaysian Civil Defence Department's programmes and activities so that it could discharge its responsibilities more effectively.

He said the department now had 9,500 active members and over 3000 cadets. -- BERNAMA

YBK JK