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Inquiry-Arrest

ANWAR DID NOT RESIST ARREST, INQUIRY TOLD

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 22 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim submitted to arrest without any resistance, the Royal Commission of Inquiry investigating injuries allegedly sustained by him while in police custody was told today.

Brickfields OCPD ACP Koh Hong Sun, 46, said the former deputy prime minister also did not resist when a police officer, Insp Nasaruddin Nasir, blindfolded him with a handkerchief on their way to the Bukit Aman police headquarters, here, after he was arrested at his house on Sept 20 last year.

"The blindfold was applied on Anwar without his glasses on," he told the three-member panel comprising former Chief Justice of Malaya Tan Sri Anuar Zainal Abidin as its head, former Court of Appeal Judge Datuk Mahadev Shankar and orthopaedic surgeon Datuk Yeoh Poh Hong.

The setting up of the commission was announced by Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad last month following calls by various parties for a full investigation into Anwar's injuries.

Investigations conducted by the police earlier had been found to be incomplete by Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah.

Koh, the second witness in the inquiry led by former attorney-general Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman, said he received an instruction to arrest Anwar from Kuala Lumpur Chief of Police, Datuk Kamaruddin Mohamed Ali, on Sept 20 last year.

He arrived at Anwar's house in No 8, Jalan Setiamurni 1, Bukit Damansara, here, at about 9.05pm with some police officers and saw many people shouting "Reformasi" and "Allahuakbar" outside the house.

Some of them, whom he believed to be Anwar's supporters, told him that Anwar was at the moment taking care of his medicine and performing his prayers at the first floor of the house, he said.

He later went inside the house and after Anwar emerged from a room, he approached Anwar, touched him on his left arm and told Anwar that he was arresting him.

"He did not resist the arrest. He did not do anything against me or the other officers present there. He submitted to be arrested without resistance," Koh said.

Anwar was later escorted by Koh and other police officers out of the house to a police Peroda van parked in front of the house, followed by his wife and children.

Koh said that five minutes after leaving the house, the convoy of patrol cars and the van ferrying Anwar and his family stopped and he was later approached by Bukit Aman Special Task Force Commander acting SAC 1 Datuk Meor Chek Hussein Mahayuddin who informed him that Anwar would be going in his (Koh's) patrol car.

In the car, Anwar was flanked by Koh and Nasaruddin and in the middle of the journey, Koh said, he saw Nasaruddin blindfold Anwar after taking a handkerchief from the driver of the car.

"I asked him by using hand gesture after he had blindfolded Datuk Seri Anwar. He gestured back with his hand which I understood to mean he has got an instruction to do so," he said.

Asked by Abu Talib if Anwar said anything to him during the process of the arrest, Koh said he could only remember Anwar telling him that the police would have to pay for the broken glass panel of his door.

Upon arriving at Bukit Aman, he handed Anwar over to ASP Rodwan Mohamed Yusoff at the lock-up counter.

At this stage, Abu Talib submitted that it was important for the panel and the counsel involved to visit Bukit Aman so they could have a clearer view of various locations in Bukit Aman which would be mentioned by the witnesses.

Anwar then ruled that arrangements be made for the team to visit Bukit Aman at about 2.15pm and for the inquiry to continue with Koh's evidence after the visit.

Earlier, Meor Chek Hussein, said he was instructed to join a team of police officers to arrest Anwar.

When he arrived at Anwar's house, he found the front door closed and was not allowed in despite identifying himself as a policeman and seeking permission to enter.

"My team members had no choice but to break down the front door which was made of wood," he said.

He said there were 300 to 350 people in the house and he met Anwar who was standing in the hall.

"At that time I heard something like a scream and words which I cannot recall but I remember Datuk Seri Anwar pointing at my face. I was about two feet away from him then." he said.

Meor Chek Hussein said that after introducing himself and informing Anwar that he had come to arrest him, the former deputy prime minister said: "You think I am scared of you?".

He said he replied: "It is not a matter of whether you are scared of me or I am scared of you but I have instruction to take Datuk Seri to Bukit Aman."

Anwar then told him that he wanted to discuss with his lawyers first and went upstairs to pray, accompanied by two police officers.

After praying, Anwar was taken to a waiting police van, carrying his youngest child and followed by his wife and other children, he said.

-- BERNAMA

ROS JK