

03 FEB 1999

Commission-Abu Talib

FORMER AG TO PROBE ALL ASPECTS OF ANWAR'S "BLACK EYE"

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- Former Attorney-General Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman has vowed to carry out a complete investigation into former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's "black eye".

"I will try to look into every aspect of the case," he told reporters at his office here today.

Abu Talib, 60, is a member of the independent commission of inquiry set up to probe the injuries on Anwar while in police custody last September.

The commission is headed by former Chief Judge of Malaya Tan Sri Anuar Zainal Abidin. The other members of the commission are former Appeals Court Judge Datuk Mahadev Shankar and former Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president and orthopaedic surgeon Datuk Dr Yeoh Poh Hong.

The soft-spoken but no-nonsense former chief prosecutor said he had to call for the news conference following numerous queries from the media to the members of the commission.

Abu Talib retired on Oct 30, 1993 after heading the Attorney-General chambers from 1980.

Abu Talib stressed that his function in the commission would be to lead the investigations and present to the commission the evidence.

And as to the next briefing to the media, he indicated that it would be made by the commission's secretary once the appointment was made.

Telling critics of the commission to judge them after the panel had completed its task, Abu Talib said they should give the commission a chance to prove itself.

"I hope they don't `pre-judge'. Judge us by our conduct and performance.

"The people will be the judge and they are the best judge and we are prepared to be judged and we must be judged fairly," he said.

His statement comes in the wake of allegations by the opposition on the Internet questioning the credibility of Abu Talib and Dr Yeoh.

The opposition claimed that Abu Talib allegedly destroyed an evidence for a case involving former Dewan Rakyat Deputy Speaker D.P Vijandran and that Dr Yeoh is working for Pantai Medical Centre which is owned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's son, Mirzan.

"I think that is not relevant. I do not want to comment," was Abu Talib's remark when asked on the allegations.

Yesterday, Dr Mahathir in dismissing the allegations asked if there was any proof that Abu Talib had destroyed the evidence as claimed.

-- BERNAMA

ES AHH AO