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Abdullah-Police

GOVT WILL NOT PROTECT ERRANT COPS, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 2 (Bernama) -- The government takes a serious view of wrongdoings committed by policemen and will not protect them from such acts, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said tonight.

He said it is public knowledge that action had been taken against many errant policemen including charging them in court and imposing appropriate sentence against those who had been found guilty.

" Hence, there is no cover up. We are not saying that because he is a policeman, we will not do anything to him. If something is wrong, it is definitely wrong. If a big mistake or a big offence is committed, then the punishment must commensurate the offence," he said.

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, was speaking in a special interview with New Straits Times Group Editor-in-Chief Datuk A.Kadir Jasin aired live over RTM's TV1 tonight.

Abdullah said recent incidents involving policemen should not be regarded as a norm in the police force.

He said policemen in the country still maintained their discipline while discharging their duties.

He said the Royal Malaysia Police were regarded as among the most efficient among the police forces in developing countries as they have contributed immensely to the country's peace and stability.

Asked on the public's negative perception on the police force to the extent of they being prejudice against policemen, Abdullah said these were mere assumptions with no substantiated proof.

On the whole, policemen were doing a good job for the country and people, he said.

He, however, said they could still improve their services by equipping themselves with sophisticated tools to face the new global crime scene.

On the Independent Commission of Inquiry set up to investigate injuries sustained by former deputy prime minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim while under police custody in September last year, he said the commission had been entrusted with the task of focusing their attention on the incident that had occurred.

He said the government decided to set up the commission as it took a serious view of what had happened.

"We did not take it for granted as it is a serious offence," he said.

Abdullah said the government took into account the people's views that the commission be independent and hence, it was decided not to have policemen in the commission.

Although it is not a Royal Commission of Inquiry as was demanded by the opposition and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the commission would submit its report on the findings to the Yang Di-Pertuan Agong for appropriate action to be taken against those responsible.

The four-member commission is headed by former Chief Judge of Malaya Tan Sri Anuar Zainal Abidin.

Its other members are former Court of Appeal Judge Datuk Mahadev Shankar, former Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president and consultant orthopaedic surgeon Datuk Dr Yeoh Poh Hong and former Attorney-General Tan Sri Abu Talib Othman.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced the formation of the commission on Jan 27.

-- BERNAMA

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