

19 JAN 1999

Mahathir-Anwar

A-G STUDYING SETTING UP INDEPENDENT PANEL TO PROBE "BLACK EYE" INCIDENT

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 19 (Bernama) -- The Attorney-General's Chambers is studying suggestions to set up an independent commission to probe the injuries sustained by Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim while he was under police custody, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"No decision has been made," the Prime Minister told reporters at his Hari Raya open house at his official residence "Sri Perdana" here.

He was asked by reporters on developments regarding the proposal to set up the commission to investigate the "black eye" incident.

Dr Mahathir had said the government would consider setting up an independent panel to investigate the matter if that was what the people wanted.

Dr Mahathir was reported to have said that an inquiry carried out by a special police team was incomplete probably because statements were not recorded from some senior police officers.

Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah said on Jan 5 that the team headed by ACP Mat Zain Ibrahim had not recorded statements from nine senior police officers including the then Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor.

Mohtar held the police responsible for some of the injuries suffered by Anwar based on the findings of the inquiry.

This prompted the resignation of Abdul Rahim on Jan 8.

Several groups including Gerakan, DAP and the Bar Council had called on the government to set up an independent body to investigate the incident.

Anwar was sacked as deputy prime minister and finance minister on Sept 2 and from Umno a day later.

He was arrested on Sept 20 under the Internal Security Act (ISA) for organising a series of illegal gatherings and street protests disturbing public peace.

He was subsequently charged with five counts each of corruption and sodomy.

He has pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

-- BERNAMA

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