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LEAD Harakah-Report

TWO POLICE REPORTS LODGED AGAINST HAKAKAH

KUALA LUMPUR, March 27 (Bernama) -- Two police reports were today lodged against the "Harakah" newspaper for publishing statements one of which smacked of slander against Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the other appeared to be in contempt of court.

The reports were lodged by Federal Territory Umno Youth Chief Abdul Azim Mohamad Zabidi at the Dang Wangi Police Station and by the Selangour Umno Youth Chief Jaya Kusuma Rusman at the Petaling Jaya Police Station.

The two reports were based on the cases identified by the committee set up by the Umno Supreme Council to handle slander and threats against Umno and government leaders.

Abdul Azim lodged the report based on a quote published by the newspaper in its issue of Feb 5, 1999.

"The false claims can be interpreted as inciting the people to hate the Prime Minister, the country's leadership and the Government of Malaysia," he said in the police report.

Speaking to reporters later, Abdul Azim said the report represented a preliminary action in facing the problems being created by irresponsible people.

He said the movement would take several other actions through existing channels to stop all forms of allegations, slander and false news.

Jaya Kusuma lodged the police report based on two reports in the March 22 issue of Harakah pertaining to the trial of Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

"I feel that the statement can be taken to mean by the readers that the court's verdict had already been decided even though the trial is still in progress," he said in the police report.

The statement as published could also be interpreted as trying to create the impression of government interference in court decisions and to incite the people to have doubts about the independence of the judiciary in this country.

Speaking to reporters Jaya expressed confidence that police would carry out investigations with full responsibility and he would await its outcome.

-- BERNAMA

AFY AAM