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Court-Inquest

SIX MEN SHOT DEAD BY POLICE ALL HAD GUNSHOT WOUNDS ON HEAD

TUMPAT, July 3 (Bernama) -- A coroner's inquest into the police shooting of six men here in 1998 heard today that the shots that caused their deaths were mostly aimed at the head.

Kuala Terengganu Hospital pathologist Dr Abdul Karim Tajuddin said the post-mortem on the six bodies showed that all of them had more than one gunshot marks on their head some of which had penetrated the forehead, eye and ear.

"The shootings were also from more than one direction as there were victims with marks showing they were shot from the front, right and left," he said.

In the incident at Kampung Neting on the Kota Baharu-Pengkalan Kubor road on Oct 3, 1998, the six men who were in a van when were shot by police on suspicion of smuggling firearms.

The six were Ramachandran Sitaraman, 37, Subramaniam Kannapareddy, 38, Ravi Suppayah, 33, Ganesan Sinasamy, 30, Shumugam Kupusamy, 21, Rajendran Subramaniam, 37.

The inquest is being held after the Bar Council sent a memorandum to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was then the Home Minister.

It is conducted by magistrate Ahmad Bazli Bahruddin, acting as the coroner, while Bar Council Criminal Law Committee chairman Mohamed Apandi Ali is holding a watching brief for the council.

Dr Abdul Karim said the post-mortem also revealed multiple gunshot wounds that damaged the brain causing instant death.

There were also gunshot wounds on the six men's arms, chest, shoulders, ribs and abdomen, he said.

Eight shots had pierced Ravi's body, six Shumugam's body and five each Rajendran's and Ganesan's bodies, he said.

Dr Abdul Karim concluded that some of the deceased were shot at close range based on the bullet marks on the body.

"There were burnt marks on Subramaniam's body at the upper part of his right chest caused by the heat of the bullet fired from a distance of less than one metre," he said.

The inquest will continue on Aug 14.

--BERNAMA

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