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Abdullah-Sun

RESIGNATION OF "THE SUN" EDITORS NOT MY DIRECTIVE, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 29 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he never instructed the editor-in-chief and editor of The Sun to resign their posts for the publication of a story on an alleged plot to kill him and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I didn't give any specific instruction; I just leave it to (Home Ministry) Secretary-General Datuk Seri Aseh Che Mat to talk to them," he told reporters after attending a Hari Raya gathering organised by the Malay Journalists Association here today.

Abdullah was asked by reporters whether the resignations of The Sun's editor-in-chief H'ng Hung Yong and editor Andy Ng were the result of his instruction as Home Minister.

He said The Sun had apologised for the story and the ministry had accepted it and so did Dr Mahathir.

"We just want to know where they got the information and why they had decided to front-page the news," he said.

Both the editors resigned to take responsibility for the story which appeared on Christmas day.

Dr Mahathir, when commenting on the report the following day, said he was saddened by such sensational reporting as it could affect Malaysia's economy and give a bad impression of the country.

The article quoted sources as saying that some local politicians had hired a hitman to assassinate the country's top two leaders.

Dr Mahathir, Abdullah and the police have said that they were not aware of any such plot.

Abdullah said the ministry had yet to decide on any action against the newspaper.

About 1,000 people including 200 orphans attended the Hari Raya gathering which also attracted more than a hundred superbikers, mainly from the Kuala Lumpur Motorcycle and Recreational Club.

Earlier, in his speech, Abdullah said the government and the public could continue to help and show their love for orphans because the country was prospering.

"These children will be able to grow up well without parents. The important thing is we can convince them that they are loved and when they grow up they can become progressive members of the society," he said.

The gathering was compered by Helmi "The Gimmick". Helmi and Bagan Datoh MP Datuk Zahid Hamidi contributed RM15 "Hari Raya" money to each orphan.

The children also received school bags from Converse AllStar.

-- BERNAMA  
SLR AFY YBY