

07 OCT 2002
Sabah-Filipina
ALLEGED RAPE VICTIM POSSIBLY MALAYSIAN, SAYS IGP

KOTA KINABALU, Oct 7 (Bernama) -- Jawina Song, 13, who was allegedly raped by police while in a detention centre in Sabah, is believed to be a Malaysian and not a Philippine national, Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Tan Sri Norian Mai said today.

Jawina's story prompted President Gloria Arroyo to send a letter to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who ordered an immediate investigation.

"So far, 120 statements have been recorded and we are confident, based on our investigations, that Jawina is a Malaysian," Norian told reporters here.

Investigations into Jawina's allegation are handled by a special team led by Criminal Investigations Department (Special Investigation) Principal Assistant Director ACP Takbir Ahmad Nazir.

However, Norian said the girl's nationality was being ascertained using DNA testing involving her parents who are still in Sabah. The girl also has relatives in Sabah, he added.

Norian said efforts are underway with the help of Philippine authorities to bring the girl back to Sabah for an identification parade.

On how a Malaysian could be arrested during "Ops Nyah", Norian said: "I believe that during initial questioning she was unable provide details on her parents, and where she lived. That's why she was detained for further questioning.

"Due to the lack of evidence, she was categorised as an illegal immigrant," he said.

Norian said Jawina was homeless and had never been to school. She was detained while loitering in town.

-- BERNAMA
MK PC ABG