

10/05/2003

Battle against porn trade gets full backing

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THE battle against pornographic video compact discs received the attention of Utusan Malaysia and Berita Harian, with both front-paging directives from the Cabinet and Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for an all-out war against manufacturers, distributors and sellers of smut material.

On Wednesday, Berita Harian reported that the police and the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry had been directed by Abdullah to stamp out the menace.

He also wanted action taken against those behind the production and distribution of the porn VCD entitled Kehidupan Seorang Pramugara Yang Terlampau, said to involve Malaysia Airlines flight attendants.

Abdullah, who was not pleased with the action taken by various agencies in curbing the problem, said there should not be any let-up in enforcement.

Utusan Malaysia on Thursday reported that the Cabinet was unhappy with the inconsistency shown by enforcement agencies in tackling the problem of pornographic VCDs, slot machines and illegal immigrants.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim was quoted as saying that the Cabinet viewed with concern the weaknesses in enforcement, which allowed porn VCDs and slot machines to proliferate.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, chairing his first Cabinet meeting on Wednesday after a two-month leave, had also expressed disappointment.

Berita Harian commented on two attacks on Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry enforcement officials in Selangor and Penang by thugs known as "tonto".

In an editorial on Wednesday, the paper said such incidents have to be curbed before lives are lost.

Illegal VCD syndicates were also resorting to new tactics to foil raids by calling spouses of enforcement officers to inform that their husbands or wives were actually partying under the guise of conducting raids.

The story quoted the Perak Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs deputy director Suhaimi Mat Sarr as saying: "Their aim is to create problems in the families, which will eventually affect the concentration of enforcers in their duties."

In another news item datelined Kota Baru, Berita Harian yesterday ran a story of a man armed with a small axe running amok and kicking his ex-wife out of jealousy because she had remarried. The former convict, in his 40s, was said to have smashed the windscreen of his former wife's car and an aquarium after forcing his way into her house on two occasions.

Police said the woman was the second wife of her new husband, who was not at home during the incident.

In another story about marriage, a second wife of an air force sergeant in Kuantan has been taking care of her husband's first wife, who has been in a coma for three years.

Asmawati Maskon, 27, who married Mohamad Azmi Yusof, 37, seven months ago, also took charge of her four step-children.