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`GRO exercising right to seek legal action'

JASIN, Sun. - The guest relations officer who is suing the Volunteer Reserve Corps and Government for RM5 million is merely exercising her individual rights, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Zainal Abidin Zin said today.

Zainal Abidin said being a democratic country, any citizen could take any party to court to seek justice.

"Since the guest relations officer (Maslinda Ishak) has made an application to the court, there is no other way but to settle the matter in court," he said.

"As far as the Home Ministry is concerned, the Volunteer Reserve Corps or Rela has taken the necessary action in sacking the offending officer," he said.

The deputy minister was speaking after officiating at the Jasin district anti-drug campaign.

Also present were his Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Seri Abu Zahar Isnin who is also Jasin MP; State Women's, Welfare and Family Development Committee chairman Datuk Ramlah Abas, Sungai Rambai Assemblyman, Datuk Abdul Azis Abdul Ghani, and Jasin district officer, Haris Hassan.

He was asked to comment on Maslinda filing a RM5 million suit on Friday, naming a member of the Volunteer Reserve Corps (Angkatan Relawan Rakyat Malaysia - Rela), Mohamad Tahir Osman, as the first defendant, Rela director-general (second defendant), the Federal Territory Religious Department or Jawi (third defendant) and the Government (fourth defendant).

The suit was filed at the High Court registry at Wisma Denmark through Maslinda's lawyer, Karpal Singh.

Meanwhile, at the same function, Zainal Abidin said district officers nationwide would be appointed as Pemadam chiefs in their districts to give more bite to the nation's drive against dadah abuse.

He said the matter had been agreed to by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.