

'Freedom for sale' probe: Two ex-EO detainees held
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The Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) has detained two former Emergency Ordinance (EO) detainees to facilitate investigations into the claims against Deputy Internal Security Minister Mohd Johari Baharum.

According to a Bernama report, which quoted a source, one of the men arrested hailed from Chemor, Perak.

He was detained in Ipoh last week whereas the second individual was arrested in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday.

The source said following the arrest, the ACA can now carry out a comprehensive investigation into the matter.

Last week, an anonymous posting on a website had accused Johari of accepting bribes amounting to RM5.5 million to free several EO detainees held in connection with triad and vice activities.

One of the detainees was said to be the brother of another deputy minister. Johari has denied the allegation.

Don't sensationalise

Meanwhile, the source told Bernama that one of the men picked up was arrested under the EO last October for having foreign women working in his massage parlour in Ipoh and gangland activities.

The other is said to be a well-known businessmen who owns a chain of four-digit number forecast shops in Lumut, Perak.

The 42-year-old man, who is said to be the brother of the deputy minister, has been on the police wanted list for the past six years. He is also believed to be involved in gangland activities and extortion rackets.

He was arrested under the EO last December when he went to renew his international passport in Sitiawan.

The third EO detainee implicated in the 'freedom for sale' allegation has yet to be arrested. The suspect hails from Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

Johari: Don't sensationalise matter

Meanwhile, Johari told Bernama that he has already explained the matter to Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"Please don't sensationalise this," he said, adding that he does not want the media to blow the issue out of proportion.

Asked on the declaration of assets, Johari said all parliamentarians are required to declare their assets every two years.

He also vowed to cooperate with the ACA so that the investigations can be wrapped up as soon as possible.

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