

Abdullah: Amend Child Act

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Plug loophole, A-G urged

KUANTAN: The Child Act, 2001 needs to be reviewed urgently so that justice can be served, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Commenting on a case where a boy who had killed his tuition teacher's daughter four years ago was freed by the Court of Appeal on Wednesday, Abdullah said this happened as there was no provision for sentencing in such a situation.

"My view on this case is that there is a need for the Child Act to be reviewed so that there will be no shortcomings in ensuring justice is served by the courts.

"The urgency is there and it is important to review the Act so proper sentencing can be meted out," he told a press conference at a hotel here yesterday.

Abdullah also said the Attorney-General's Chambers would be instructed to review the Act, adding that it would take some time before it could be implemented, as any amendment would have to be tabled in Parliament.

He and his wife, Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah, later attended the wedding reception of one of his Sri Perdana staff members, Mohammad Hitam, in Kampung Balok here.

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DATUK SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI

The boy, who turns 18 next month, had been sentenced by the High Court to be detained at the pleasure of the King.

He was found guilty of murdering the 11-year-old girl at her house in Kuala Lumpur on May 30, 2002. The boy was 12 at the time.

On July 12, the Court of Appeal upheld the conviction but set aside the sentence, ruling that it was "unconstitutional".

The prosecution responded by filing an appeal on July 16 against the ruling of invalidity. On Wednesday, the Court of Appeal released the boy, which prompted the prosecution to file another appeal two days later, objecting to the boy's release.