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Newspaper	THE STAR
Date	9/1/2011

Pak Lah explains silence over Rais case

PETALING JAYA: Former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he kept silent on the alleged rape case involving Datuk Seri Rais Yatim because he was of the opinion that the incident did not take place.

Denying that he had kept quiet in order to close the case and protect the Information, Communication and Culture Minister, Abdullah said he believed that the allegation by a blogger and the Opposition was baseless.

In fact, the incident had never been reported to him throughout his tenure as Prime Minister from October 2003 to April 2009, he said at a media conference over allegations that he had not issued a statement then as he wanted to protect Rais.

"What's the purpose of giving a statement? The accusation is not true.

"Now that you have asked, I give you the statement. I certainly did not receive any report on the allegation," he said yesterday.

In the blog, Rais, who was then the Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister, was alleged to have molested his former domestic maid and the Abdullah administration was accused of keeping quiet in order to avoid a regional conflict.

On Friday, *Detik.com* news portal reported that Rais' former domestic maid, who was alleged to have been molested, had denied the allegation, adding that the minister was a kind man. - Bernama