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## Child victims have safe and cosy room to testify

**PUTRAJAYA:** It looks like any comfortable and well-furnished room and, given the situation of its intended occupants, it certainly needs to look welcoming.

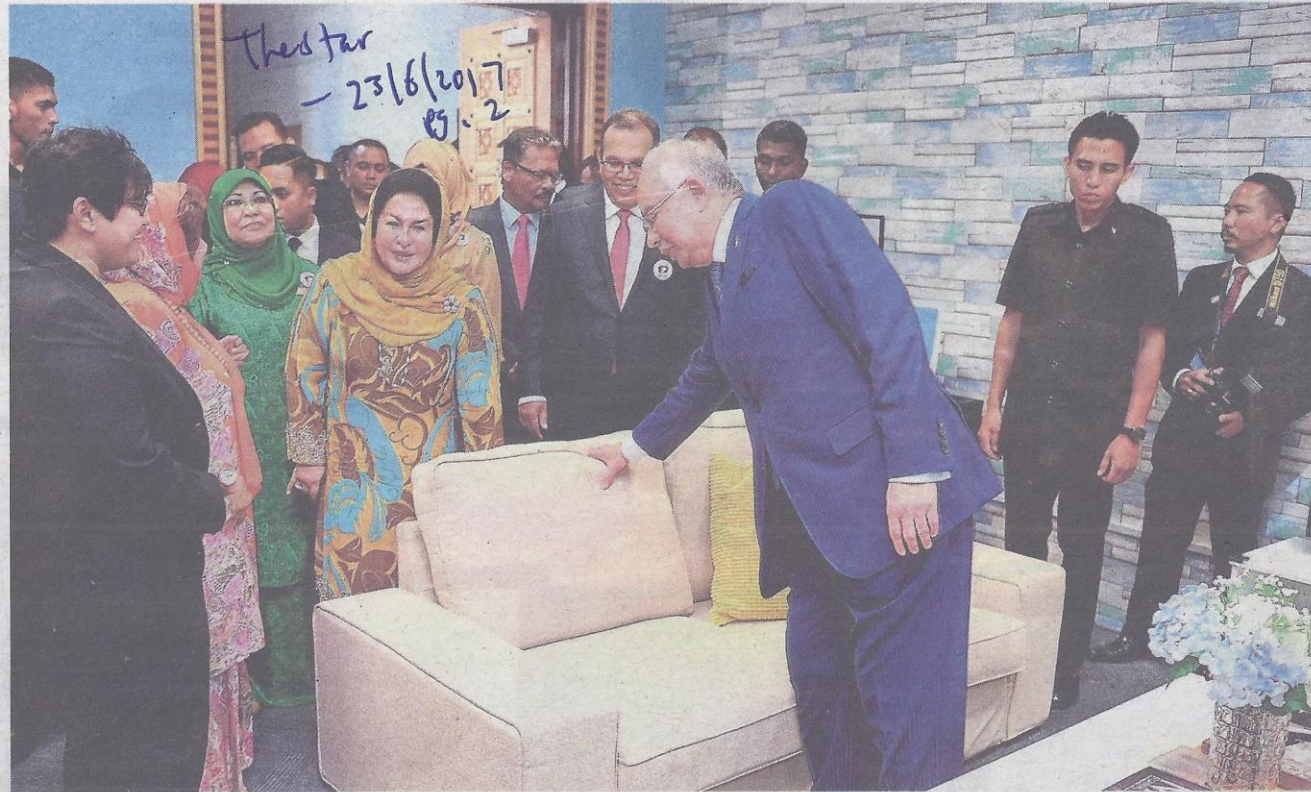
This is the room where child victims will await their turn to testify in the Special Criminal Court on sexual crimes against children.

Originally an office, the room has been converted into a spacious living room complete with sofa, coffee table, TV, two computers, a bedroom and a small pantry corner.

The Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor launched the room, dubbed the Permata Room, in conjunction with the new Special Criminal Court yesterday.

The Permata Foundation, of which Rosmah is patron, contributed to the preparation of and equipment in the room.

Next to the bedroom is another room equipped with a Court Recording and Transcription system with a camera and TV monitor mounted on the wall in front of a white table and chairs.



This is where the underage victims will give their testimony, well away from the accused.

It is believed this will lessen the stress and trauma of the victim while testifying against the perpetrator.

The victim, however, would be seen on camera by the parties in the courtroom.

Chief Registrar Datuk Seri Latifah Mohd Tahar said there is a special lift that the child witness can use from the parking lot to reach the

Permata Room.

The scenario is different from the 1990s, where some courtrooms practised bringing child witnesses in sexual offence cases into the judge's chambers as child-friendly facilities were limited.

Without the accused present, the child would be in chambers along with the prosecution and defence teams.

The judge would then assess the child's testimony and decide whether it was fabrication or the truth.

**Welcoming space:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and his wife Rosmah visiting the Permata Room at the Special Criminal Court in Putrajaya. With them are Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said (left), Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim (in green), Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohamed Apandi Ali and Chief Justice Tan Sri Md Raus Sharif. — Bernama