

Cops to start using body cam soon

Move will increase transparency and provide accurate account in dispute

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PUTRAJAYA: Policemen and other officers involved in enforcement may soon be equipped with body cameras to increase the level of transparency in law enforcement, said Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said there have been situations where enforcement officers have been accused of being high-handed, and having the cameras will offer a truthful account.

"These officers will talk or do something while at work, so we want to know if they are doing the right thing, and how they behave towards their client. There are accusations where officers have bullied or beaten up people. So we want to know the truth.

"Of course, the officers will deny, while the client will insist it is true. Between the two, we do not know who is right.

"But with body cameras, we will know whether the accusation against the officer has basis or not," said Dr Mahathir at a press conference yesterday.

He was speaking after chairing a meeting with the Special Cabinet Committee on Anti-Corruption at Perdana Putra here.

Also present at the press conference were Governance, Integrity



and Anti-Corruption Centre director-general Tan Sri Abu Kassim Mohamed and Chief Secretary to the Government Datuk Seri Dr Ismail Bakar.

Dr Mahathir said the committee has also acknowledged the need to maintain and increase the use of CCTVs at police lock-ups to prevent misconduct and address the issue of

deaths while under custody.

"This will be implemented as soon as we have the money. We will give priority to body cameras and CCTVs mainly," said Dr Mahathir.

The Prime Minister also said Malaysia loses RM3bil to RM5bil a year due to revenue leakages at the country's borders.

"The meeting recommends that

the efficiency of the Customs Department be improved through improved technology in the department's operations," he said.

To implement the initiatives in the National Anti-Corruption Plan, Dr Mahathir said the allocation in the upcoming national budget must reflect the need to achieve the plan's goals.

Ramping up law enforcement: Dr Mahathir with Ismail (right) and Abu Kassim during a press conference after chairing a meeting with the Special Cabinet Committee on Anti-Corruption at Perdana Putra today.
— Bernama

This would mean beefing up enforcement agencies, but he warned that the government must also be wary about increasing the size of the civil service in doing so.

"The Immigration Department, the police and Customs Department are short of staff.

"But there are currently 1.7 million civil servants. So we need to find a way to shift people within the civil service to other designations so that we will not be adding more staff to the civil service. We do not have the money to employ more people as well," he said.

On the government's policy towards direct negotiation for procurements, Dr Mahathir said exceptions will be made in special cases deemed "essential".

"For example, in the armed forces, they identify a particular equipment, and if the particular equipment comes from only one company, then they can have direct negotiations.

"But this must be justified, and they must state why they want direct negotiations. They must also get the permission of the Finance Ministry."

Watch the video
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