

DPM Wants COI Set Up To Probe Fire at HSA
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JOHOR BAHRU, Oct 25 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi wants a Commission of Inquiry (COI) to be set up to carry out a detailed investigation into today's fire incident at the Intensive Care Unit of the Sultanah Aminah Hospital (HSA) here, which left six people dead.

"The findings of the COI later can be used as a guide for all hospitals in the country especially those which need to undergo renovations or to be upgraded," he told reporters after the visiting the fire scene and families of the victims.

He stressed on the importance of the aspect of maintenance including the wiring system and the necessity to upgrade hospital buildings to prevent a repeat of the tragedy.

He also called for attention to be given to access roads to hospitals.

Ahmad Zahid said he hoped Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam will table a full report on the tragedy to the Cabinet meeting next week.

The Deputy Prime Minister praised Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin who acted quickly to help the victims, patients and public at HSA.

"We in the federal government will help in the best way possible. Hopefully at the Cabinet meeting next week, Datuk Seri S. Subramaniam will table a full report so that follow-up action can be taken immediately.

Ahmad Zahid, also expressed his thanks to the rescue teams, including from the Fire and Rescue Department, the Police and staff of HSA who took immediate action to save patients and move them to a safer place.

To ensure that the HSA's operations return to normal, immediate short-term measures will be taken to provide ICU facilities in a part of the hospital that is fully-equipped.

He said the long-term measures include rewiring at the HSA and purchasing new equipment for the ICU as quickly as possible.

"I myself will discuss with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak to provide a special allocation for the long-term measures at the hospital's ICU," he said.

The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that forensic accounting and management accounting would be conducted to determine if there were weaknesses in the hospital administration.

Ahmad Zahid said the long-term measures should not only consider moving old hospitals like the HSA

to a new building but also procuring new equipment to prevent a repeat of the incident at the same location.

"It is no use shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted. I am sure the Health Minister himself will bring this matter to the Cabinet for immediate action to be taken and allocation provided for short-term and long-term measures," he said.

Asked if the services of the hospital's facility providers will be reviewed following the fire, Ahmad Zahid said they were subject to the agreement with the concession companies and the Health Ministry.

"I am sure the (Health) ministry's legal advisor and officials from the Attorney-General's Chambers will advise the ministry and I myself, God willing, if asked, will coordinate the special action," he said.

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