

## **Don't Be Embarrassed To Report Child Sexual Abuse - Rosmah**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 14 (Bernama) -- Parents should not be embarrassed to lodge a report if their children have become the victims of sexual crimes, said the Prime Minister's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

She said the stigma that sexual crimes were seen as taboo should be eliminated so that the children would not be afraid to report on the abuse.

"At the same time, the children should be further equipped with (responsibility) so that they will feel responsible for themselves and to protect (their) peers.

"In addition, they need to be informed on the general characteristics of the crime such as it is done by people whom they know and trust," she said in her speech at the closing of the seminar titled 'Child Sex Crimes: Stop!!!' here today.

Rosmah, who is also the patron of Permata programme, said most of the sexual crime cases including rape, incest and unnatural sex that occurred between 2014 and 2016 involved those who aged 18 years and below.

"What is most shocking is that 89 per cent of these cases involved perpetrators who were known to the victims and well-trusted such as family members; their acquaintances; friends; neighbours; and adults at schools and hostels," she said.

Thus, Rosmah urged that such a seminar be extended to the grassroots level nationwide with participation from the wives of Menteri Besar, Chief Ministers and members of parliament (MPs) to educate and raise public awareness.

She also said the participants of the seminar proposed that a dedicated online 'helpline' be established to help these children, as well as their parents, guardians and the society in general.

The seminar, organised by Permata with the cooperation of several relevant ministries, was attended by almost 2,000 participants, including wives of politicians, academicians, child nursery and kindergarten operators and university students.

In his opening speech at the seminar yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said a Bill to specially address child sexual crimes in a holistic and comprehensive manner would be tabled in the current session of Parliament.

He also hoped that the Child Sexual Offences Bill 2017 would receive the support of all MPs because it was the responsibility of all parties regardless of political affiliation.

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