

## **Malaysia To Hold Seminar In Fight Against Child Sexual Crime**

PUTRAJAYA, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will listen to and share experiences with three other countries, namely the United Kingdom, Australia and India in the fight against child sexual crime during a seminar to be held in Kuala Lumpur on March 13 and 14.

The seminar's patron, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, who is also the prime minister's wife, said this was to help the government bring legislative changes to prevent sexual crime against children and to raise public awareness before the Child Sexual Crime Bill would be tabled, discussed and passed in Parliament.

"I view seriously the crimes committed against children and adolescents. Cases which threaten the safety and rights of children such as sexual abuse happen everywhere," she said during the pre-launch and press conference on the seminar at Seri Perdana, here, today.

Child security issues should be taken seriously by all levels of society, she added, as children were one of the country's major assets.

Rosmah said police statistics showed that as of October 2016, a total of 12,025 cases of various crimes involving children under the age of 18 had been reported, and that the number was going up each year.

Therefore, she hoped the seminar to be held at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) next month, would be able to promote concerted efforts by all stakeholders to address and stop child sexual abuse.

She said among the topics to be discussed at the seminar would be understanding child sexual crime in Malaysia, based on international perspectives.

Four experts from abroad will be speaking at the seminar, namely John Donald Findlater of the Lucy Faithful Foundation & Stop It Now, England; Carol Ronken and Hetty Johnston of Bravehearts, Australia; and Vidya Reddy from the Centre for the Prevention and Healing of Child Sexual Abuse, India.

The seminar which will also feature 11 local speakers from various backgrounds and expertise, is set to draw 2,000 participants comprising children, students, parents, policy makers and local enforcement officials.

Rosmah said among the other topics to be discussed at the seminar would be looking into the minds and behaviour patterns of criminals and their impact on the victims in Malaysia, as well as the role and responsibilities of the community in combating child sexual abuse.

She added that the seminar had received the support of local celebrities and artistes such as comedian Harith Iskander, actors Lisa Surihani and Fahrin Ahmad, as well as television presenter Daphne Iking.

To one of the questions at the press conference, Rosmah said in efforts to curb sexual crime against children, parents should also be more informed of the social life of their children, and with whom they communicated with.

Meanwhile, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said who was present at the press conference, said the Child Sexual Crime Bill was expected to be discussed at the parliamentary sitting next month.

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