

Underaged girl: Family requests privacy - Dr Wan Azizah

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PUTRAJAYA, July 10 (Bernama) -- The family involved in the case of a marriage between an 11-year-old Thai girl and a local man aged 41, has asked that their privacy be respected, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

She said this was because the families of both parties had other children who were also affected by the news that went viral on the internet.

"This is too much for them. I understand because when my husband was taken as prisoner, my family also had some sort of problem," Wan Azizah who is also Minister of Women, Family and Community Development told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Yayasan Kebajikan Negara (YKN) (National Welfare Foundation) Board of Trustees at the ministry here today.

Asked about the girl, Dr Wan Azizah said she was still in Malaysia and had undergone two counselling sessions.

"Our checks did not find any signs of abuse on the girl," she said.

News of the marriage, the third for the man, which allegedly took place in Thailand, went viral and was heavily criticised by netizens. Yesterday, the Gua Musang Syariah Lower Court imposed a RM1,800-fine on the man who pleaded guilty to two charges of solemnising a marriage and committing polygamy without permission.

Meanwhile, Dr Wan Azizah said the YKN had launched the Palestine People's Fund to complement the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine after a representative from the agency met her to request for aid from the Malaysian government.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was informed of the UNRWA's objectives so the government has taken the initiative to help the people of Palestine, she said.

She said UNRWA had been facing a serious financial crisis since early this year after America withdrew more than RM1 billion in aid.

Members of the public can send their donations to the YKN-Palestine People's Fund at Alliance Islamic Bank account number 160140010011300.

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