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TOP NEWS

(From left) Mohamad Fuzi, Ahmad Zahid, Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Noh Omar and Wan Mohd Nor at the signing ceremony in Cheras yesterday.
— Picture by Azneal Ishak

Police, fire dept ink MoU to end delays on probes

KUALA LUMPUR — The Royal Malaysia Police and the Fire and Rescue Department yesterday signed an agreement on fire investigations to reduce the duration of probes and to avoid overlapping tasks.

Bernama reported that the note on smart cooperation was signed by Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun and Fire and Rescue Department director-general Datuk Seri Wan Mohd Nor Ibrahim at the Police College here, witnessed by Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

The agreement provided for all cases of fire investigations by the police to be handed over to the Fire and Rescue Department effective yesterday.

However, if a probe by the Fire and

Rescue Department reveals the element of arson, the department would hand a report on the investigation to the police for a further probe, according to Bernama.

Zahid was quoted as saying the note on smart cooperation would have a high impact particularly in terms of reducing the duration of investigations and avoiding overlapping of tasks by the two agencies.

Zahid said the collaboration had smashed the barrier of working in silos by the two agencies that had resulted in delays in solving cases.

He said the Fire and Rescue Department had started investigations on 3,901 cases of fire over the past three years and the probe on 477 of these cases had been delayed and had yet to be completed.

"The Fire and Rescue Department has

been depending on the police, and the police have been depending on the Fire and Rescue Department. Hopefully, with this collaboration, the investigation of fires can be completed fast.

"Conclusive investigations can be conducted; the police and the Fire and Rescue Department will no longer engage in a tug-of-war on who has more authority or jurisdiction in any case of fire investigation," he was quoted saying.

Zahid also advised other ministries, departments and agencies to emulate the police and the Fire and Rescue Department in implementing smart cooperation towards providing better service to the people.

The deputy prime minister also told the police and Fire and Rescue Department

personnel not to make contradictory statements during crises.

Zahid said their tasks may overlap in certain crises, but urged the police and firefighters to improve their cooperation to avoid confusing the public.

"When there is floods, landslide, accidents, or fire, we see many spokesmen rushing to give media statements.

"The statements differ from each other and this confuses the people," he said.

Zahid suggested that only one spokesman be appointed in such situations.

"Don't reveal secrets before investigations are concluded. This leads to analysis and speculation, which is not good.

"I hope this MoU covers media statements as well," he said.