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Friday, February 08, 2008

ANYERTISEMENT

A father whose son died in the Omagh bomb today said that a Policing Board review into the police investigation is "the last thing Omagh needs".

Michael Gallagher said he hoped yesterday's decision by the Policing Board to appoint a panel of independent experts to carry out a review of the police investigation into the bombing will not detract from calls from the Omagh families for a cross-border public inquiry.

He added that relatives of the victims are due to meet with the Secretary of State later this month to discuss their concerns and reinforce their call for the public inquiry.

"As we indicated to the Policing Board when we met last week we feel the last thing Omagh needs is another review or investigation into the police investigation," he said.

Mr Gallagher added: "However, we have very little power in that and if there is going to be a review then it is important that any lessons that are learned are fed into the police system.

"But we feel that this cannot detract from our calls for a cross-border public inquiry.

The Policing Board review is only going to look at the PSNI and issues this side of the border. For the" families this is only half of the picture.'

However, announcing the board's decision yesterday to carry out an independent review - despite opposition from relatives of the 29 people who died in the atrocity - board chairman Sir Desmond Rea said the review was necessary to hold officers to account for their actions.

He added that in their discussions "board members remained mindful of the views of all those who have suffered and continue to suffer as the result of the Omagh bombing atrocity.

The board acknowledged the particular views that have been expressed in relation to the board's plans in" respect of this review following the meeting with the Omagh families.

The board also acknowledged the views expressed by the families in relation to a cross-border public" inquiry," he said.

The board is responsible for holding the police to account and it agreed that this independent external review in the five key areas outlined is necessary to provide wider public assurance and confidence in respect of issues arising from the (court) judgment.

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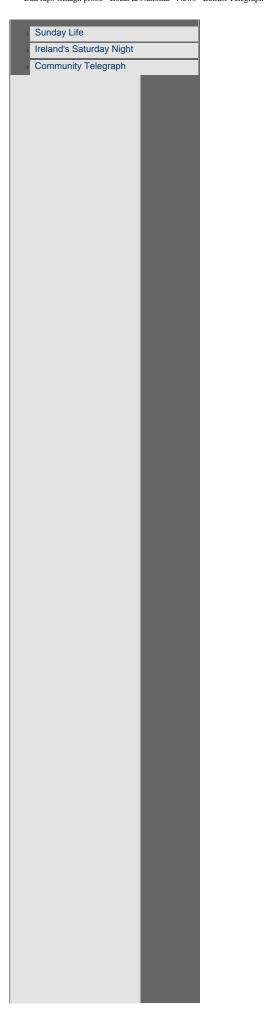
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