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Megat-Indon

INDON ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ALLOWED TO RETURN FOR HARI RAYA

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 31 (Bernama) -- Indonesian nationals who entered Malaysia illegally or those who overstayed their visit will be allowed to return for the Hari Raya holidays, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob said.

He said they must obtain the travel document in lieu of passport or SPLP from the Indonesian embassy and make travel arrangement themselves with the Immigration Department as well as paying the compound fine for those who overstayed.

"The Cabinet has given the ministry the go ahead to allow them to return to Indonesia to spend the Hari Raya with their families through legal channel," he told reporters after attending the breaking of the fast with ministry's senior officials here tonight.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Noor and Deputy IGP Datuk Samsuri Arshad were also present.

He refused to disclose the amount of compound fine imposed but said the fine would take into consideration the humanitarian aspect.

But under the Malaysian law, the maximum fine for overstaying is RM3,000.

There are between 40,000 and 50,000 illegal Indonesian immigrants in the country. The figure includes those who overstayed.

Megat Junid said the proposal to allow them to go home for the Hari Raya was made by the Immigration Department.

He said the government would not be responsible if they chose to return through illegal channel and met with difficulties.

On the setting up of an Anti-Dadah Department, he said the proposal paper had been submitted to the Prime Minister for decision.

The department, headed by a Director-General, will be placed under the Anti-Dadah Council of which Megat Junid is the chairman. --BERNAMA