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Syed Hamid-Visa

VISA: GET ASSISTANCE FROM WISMA PUTRA

KOTA BAHARU, Nov 14 (Bernama) -- Malaysians facing difficulty obtaining visas to the United States were today advised to contact Wisma Putra for assistance.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said Malaysian citizens, especially those in business, who encountered difficulty getting their visas could contact Wisma Putra.

Wisma Putra would forward their problems to the US embassy in Kuala Lumpur because the US had already stated that those who had been to that country and had a visa would not face problems, he told reporters here.

"Only those who have never been to the US will take a longer time to get the visa because (the US) regards the terrorist threat as dangerous," he told reporters after speaking at a youth forum here.

Syed Hamid said this when asked to comment on reports on the US decision to require Muslim men aged between 16 and 45 from Malaysia and 27 other countries to wait 20 days for approval of their visas.

He said Malaysia had stated its stand that the US imposition of visa restrictions on the Islamic countries only, including Malaysia, was unfair and discriminatory.

"When the western media blow up the visa issue, sooner or later the Muslims will have problems moving in other countries because people will start viewing Muslims from these countries with hatred and as coming from dangerous countries and so, may be terrorists," he said.

Syed Hamid said Malaysia would have no objections if the US tightened the visa conditions for all the countries but picking on certain countries only would have negative repercussions on these countries.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had submitted Malaysia's views on the matter to the US government.

-- BERNAMA

BD MOZ JK