

M'sia uses scanners to stem money smuggling

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Malaysia is installing scanners to detect bank notes at airports and border crossings to curb illegal money outflows believed to be in the hundreds of billions of dollars over the past decade.

The move comes after Washington-based watchdog group Global Financial Integrity said in a recent report that Malaysia lost US\$338 billion (RM1.03 trillion) between 2000 and 2009 to such outflows, ranking it fifth in the world.

NONThe Star daily quoted customs deputy director-general Zainul Abidin Taib as saying seven such scanners were already operating at KL International Airport and the rest would be installed by the end of the year.

A customs official confirmed the report to AFP.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak announced in December a special task force to check the illegal flight of funds.

He has come under fire from the political opposition which accuses his government of massive corruption, incompetence and inefficiency that is costing the country dearly.

Global Financial Integrity said Malaysia was fifth behind China, Mexico, Russia, and Saudi Arabia in illicit outflows.

Its report did not specify the causes of the Malaysian outflows but a earlier report by the group said possible causes were corrupt business practices and the large population of about 2 million illegal foreign workers in the country.

- AFP

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