

## **M'sia: Magnet for drug traffickers and criminals?**

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**By Norman**

The Malaysian public owes an immense gratitude to the Royal Malaysian Customs officers at KL International Airport for their relentless apprehension of drugs traffickers trying to smuggle drugs into the country.

Tuesday's New Straits Times reported that about RM22.7 million worth of drugs were seized by the KL International Airport customs from January to June this year.

According to Kuala Lumpur customs department director Badaruddin Mohamad Rafik, drugs weighing 138.98kg and 897 pills were seized at KLIA and at the LCCT alone.

On the same day, The Star reported the news about a Nigerian drug mule who was arrested at the LCCT with 400g of syabu in capsules which she had swallowed. The drugs had a street value of RM98,000.

Also reported was about the arrest of a Romanian man who tried to smuggle 3.29kg of syabu worth at least RM824,000 and an Indian man who was caught with 2.89kg of ketamine with a street value of RM114,000.

It is as though the floodgates have been breached and word has gotten out that Malaysia allows the easiest and most unimpeded entry to criminals, and suspicious tourists.

They are all coming to Malaysia - the South Americans, the Nigerians and other Africans, Iranians, they are all making a beeline to Malaysia.

Despite having studied and graduated from Australia and having close family ties with Australia, on my recent trip to Australia, the immigration officers still spend a little time asking me about the purpose of visit, proof of my occupation and why I made a short trip to New Zealand before coming to Australia.

In fact the embarkation card has a question "Do you have any criminal offence"? Now, after more than a century of Australian nationhood, I didn't realise it is still a pre-requisite!

The Malaysian public deserves better from the government and perhaps the prime minister should seriously look into the influx of suspicious tourists and dubious international students coming in droves to Malaysia. To continue to assign this task to Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein is a lost cause.

Another question is; don't the immigration officers vet at the entry point ask the arriving international visitor to confirm that he has a legitimate purpose in wanting to come to Malaysia?

Don't the immigration officers ask his travel itinerary, whether he has sufficient funds and if he is coming to apply to study and whether he has sufficient means.

Or is it a case of "all can come, no questions asked," policy. Maybe, the Immigration Department and its officers ought to watch the programme 'Border Security' on Astro on how the Australian immigration and custom officers deal with arriving passengers.

The government should also regularly review the entry-free visa rule for countries whose citizens are becoming a menace and a security threat to the country.

Make them apply for visas before they are allowed entry and vet thoroughly their applications.

Remember how the United Kingdom, after seeing the high level of Malaysian overstayers, wanted to impose the visa before entry rule for Malaysians.

A 45-year-old Nigerian who expresses his desire to study English or for that matter Business Studies, surely must trigger suspicion.

Malaysia, having lost the fight against Indonesian overstayers and illegals, cannot now become a haven for Africans, Iranians and South Americans whose sole purpose to enter Malaysia is for criminal purposes.

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