

Gov't: Camp near mass graves existed for five years
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The Home Ministry today confirmed the discovery of mass graves near 17 tents believed to have been used to accommodate refugees in Padang Besar.

Home Minister Zahid Hamidi said the General Operations Force (GOF) and the VAT 69 Commando unit had found 14 large tents and three other smaller tents located on the Malaysia-Thailand border.

Shocked by the discovery, he said the tents were believed to have been operational for at least five years and they were believed to have been abandoned when the authorities came to the location.

"Today, the inspector-general of police (IGP) and his deputy are at the Malaysia-Thailand border for identification and confirmation. The graves were identified as those for the refugees in the human trafficking trade.

"Probably, one grave has maybe three, four bodies or maybe only one. So we are counting at the moment.

"The PGA and VAT 69 are still investigating it and searching the areas. With the cooperation of Thailand, we will find more and more (bodies)," he told reporters after officiating the Home Ministry Family Day at the Maktab Penjara Malaysia in Kajang today.

Zahid said the IGP and his deputy would announce the details on the matter in the near future.

- Bernama