

Gov't exempts visa for Chinese tour groups
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Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today said Cabinet has decided to implement a temporary measure allowing tour groups from China to enter Malaysia without visas.

He said the exemption period will be extended if it proves to be lucrative to the Malaysian government.

“The temporary measure is to gauge if it is effective in attracting tourists from China to Malaysia.

“Cabinet agreed this only applies to tour groups. As for individual visitors, we are still trying to find a way to resolve it.

“If the trial period proves profitable to the Malaysian government and the number of tourist far exceeds its target, it will be extended,” he said.

Zahid said this at a press conference for a buka puasa (breaking of fast) programme with 200 orphans from his Bagan Datoh constituency at the Sogo shopping complex in Kuala Lumpur.

Even with this measure, he assures the country’s national security remains a priority.

“We will not compromise on matters of national security.

“We have identified a few mechanisms to ensure tourists do not overstay and return to their country of origin, together with Immigration Department, the Royal Malaysian Police and a few implementing agencies,” said Zahid.

The announcement on its implementation will be made by the Tourism and Culture Ministry, he added.