

**After PM's scandal, DPM told not to create another
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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi has been urged not to get entangled in nepotism amid Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's own scandal of receiving RM2.6 billion in his personal bank accounts.

The Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4) made the call in reference to Ahmad Zahid's brother Abdul Hakim Hamidi, whose company Real Time Networking is bidding for a contract to manage the entry of 1.5 million Bangladeshi workers into Malaysia.

The handling of foreign workers goes through the home ministry, a portfolio held by Ahmad Zahid (photo).

"Amidst financial scandals involving the transfer of US\$700 million into the private accounts of Najib, claims of illegal donations and vote buying by BN to win the 2013 national polls, we are shocked into yet another project that stinks of cronyism and patronage politics," said C4 executive director Cynthia Gabriel in a statement today.

C4 expressed concern that the latest deal may involve conflict of interest, nepotism, and collusion as Ahmad Zahid is also home minister who oversees the approval of incoming migrant workers.

"Any act seen as giving his brother's company preferential treatment totally ignores the all pertinent need for public accountability that the country needs now more than ever, as investors flee our financial markets, leading to the all-time lowest plunge of the ringgit to dip below the RM4 to the US dollar," she said.

Abdul Hakim had defended his company's bid, insisting that it was not a government contract but a collaboration with Bangladesh Association of International Recruitment Agencies.

Cynthia also asked Putrajaya to explain why was Real Time Networking offering a similar service to previous companies that were already providing them.

"C4 seeks explanations from Zahid on the rationale behind the entry of 1.5 million migrant workers from Bangladesh, and for the sudden emergence of Real Time Networking, as a player, when there are already two other companies - NERS Sdn Bhd and MyEG - doing similar jobs of managing the entry of migrant workers to Malaysia.

"Zahid must explain what has become of NERS, which had won a 12-year contract to record and monitor the immigration of foreign workers to Malaysia in 2011," she said.