

Unfair to label ethnic Uighurs as terrorists, says Zahid
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It is unfair to label individuals from the ethnic Uighur group as terrorists, says Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

In fact, he said there was a small number of the minority group who were political or economic refugees in second or third countries.

“To label them as terrorists is inaccurate, although some of them are definitely involved in terrorism,” Ahmad Zahid, who is also home minister, told reporters today, after launching the closing ceremony of the 1Malaysia Welfare Tour 2016 in Hutan Melintang.

He was commenting on media reports that two Turkish nationals from the Uighur group suspected of plotting to launch terror attacks in Thailand had left the country and were reportedly heading to Malaysia.

Surat Thani governor Wongsiri Promchana, who told Bernama this, said he was informed by the Phuket Immigration Office that the duo were travelling to Malaysia.

Commenting further on the report, Ahmad Zahid said not all Uighur people travelling to Malaysia were terrorists as some of them had valid passports.

“Some of them came to Malaysia to visit their relatives,” he added.

He said Malaysia had obtained information that the two suspects were believed to be using Thailand and Malaysia as transit points before moving on to a third country.

“We do not discount the possibility that besides the two suspects, there may be other suspects, as well.”

The deputy prime minister said Kuala Lumpur was ready to cooperate with Interpol, the heads of Asean Police (Aseanapol) and the Chinese government in this matter.

“We have the system to monitor them and we are working very closely with regional enforcement agencies and the international community,” he said.

- Bernama