

'Involvement of top ministry officers in trafficking ring not ruled out'

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The Home Ministry is not ruling out the possibility that its top-ranked officers are involved in the human trafficking and passport forgery syndicate detected at the KL International Airport (KLIA) and KLIA2.

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Home Minister, said investigations into the syndicate's activities would continue to be carried out until the syndicate was totally quashed and all of its members were brought to justice.

"I have instructed the police (to carry out the investigations) after receiving public complaint and media report on several officers being involved in passport forgery.

"Investigations have been carried out over the past two months and it was found that several officers had indeed committed the offence and tarnished the image of the department and the ministry," he told reporters after opening the 7th National Civil Service Guidance Programme (Akrab) Convention in Putrajaya today.

Ahmad Zahid said this in response to the media report on the syndicate detected to have turned KLIA and KLIA2 as their transit centre for Sri Lankan immigrants before they were sent to a third country.

The media report stated that two immigration officers were among 19 individuals arrested at KLIA yesterday for alleged involvement in the human trafficking syndicate using fake Malaysian passports.

"Those found guilty of the offence will not only face disciplinary action, but will also be charged in court.

"We will not compromise with anyone, especially those who tarnished the image of their agency, the ministry and the country for money," he added.

- *Bernama*

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