

Zahid: 100 including Immigration officers involved in 'sabotage'
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About 100 people including officials from the Immigration Department (JIM) and syndicate members are being investigated by the authorities on suspicion of being involved in sabotaging the implementation of the Malaysian Immigration System (MyIMMs).

Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the staff involved comprised mid-level officers and JIM support staff who had been in service for between one to five years.

Based on intelligence carried out by the police and the department, the syndicate was found to have indulged in activities to breach the immigration procedures between six months to two years ago by leaking the data including using certain code numbers to be abused, he said.

"Most of them carried out the sabotaging activities between six months to two years purely to make profits... Some of them are already in police custody.

"We will not be protective in this matter and in fact will take proactive measures based on media reports and public information. It's not just taking internal disciplinary action, but we will also drag those responsible to court. We will not compromise with those involved," he told reporters in Putrajaya today.

Earlier, Ahmad Zahid handed out the Yang di-Pertuan Agong scholarship for the 2016-2017 study session to 11 recipients who will further their studies at the Masters and PhD levels within and outside the country.

The Auditor-General's Report 2015 Series 1 stated that the MyIMMs, which was developed to support the main operations of the Immigration Department, was not satisfactory which resulted in its objectives being affected.

According to the report, the MyIMMs biometric facility worth RM10.3 million had been supplied and paid for, but they had yet to be installed and used at the country's entry points for the purpose of screening and verifying the identity of foreigners as well as Malaysian citizens.

Ahmad Zahid refuted the involvement of senior officers as well as suppliers of the MyIMMs in sabotaging the MyIMMs system.

Based on the investigation, one of the syndicate members was a foreigner while the rest were locals.

As such, he and the Home Ministry's secretary-general Alwi Ibrahim would meet with the suppliers to streamline and improve the system in the near future.

"The investigation revealed that the system had been hacked and weakened. With this improvement, I hope the sabotage will not be repeated," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said for the moment, monitoring on the sabotaging activities was only focused on the KL International Airport but investigation was also being carried out at the country's other entry points.

Meanwhile, on the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Scholarship, Ahmad Zahid said recipients of the most prestigious scholarship in the country must contribute their services to the country regardless of whether it was in the public or private sectors or the government-linked companies (GLCs) for five years after completion of their studies.

He said the scholarship was most attractive because the rate of living allowance was 50 percent higher than that of the federal scholarship.

Between 2006 and last year, 118 recipients comprising 59 Masters students and 59 PhD students received the scholarships.

- *Bernama*