

UK agency waited months to tell Malaysia about paedophile
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The UK National Crime Agency (NCA) knew that paedophile Richard Huckle was sexually abusing children in August 2014, but waited another three months before informing the Malaysian authorities.

Huckle, 30, was sentenced to 22 life imprisonment sentences in the UK, for sexually abusing about 200 babies and children in Malaysia and Cambodia, while posing as an English teacher and philanthropist.

Huckle, who is to serve at least 20 years in jail, first came to Malaysia on a teaching gap year when he was 19.

NCA deputy director Andrew Brennan told reporters he was contacted by Australian authorities about Huckle in August 2014, but needed time to locate and identify the Briton before providing Malaysian police with "all of the intelligence" in November, the Guardian reported.

"They didn't have sufficient evidence to arrest him, so we made a decision we would arrest him in December 2014," Brennan reportedly said.

"I'm very confident we worked very, very closely with the Malaysian authorities and an NGO based in Malaysia," he is quoted as saying.

Malaysian police said they would ask for further details from NCA so that they could help more victims to come forward.

Deputy inspector-general of police Noor Rashid Ibrahim (*photo*) told *Bernama* that 23 children have been identified as victims.

Police are also trying to look for places where Huckle stayed in the eight years he was in Malaysia.

"For now, we have identified one place in Jalan Kuching, Kuala Lumpur, while another place is under observation," Noor Rashid is quoted as saying.

Huckle reportedly groomed and preyed on children as young as six months to 12 years from 2006 to 2014.

Some of the children endured the abuse for years, while all were from poor backgrounds, including living in shelter homes.

Huckle reportedly also recorded the abuse and released them onto the web, at times for profit.

He refused to provide authorities with access to encrypted files on his computer, where thousands of pictures and videos of the offences were found.

He is also reported to have kept a ledger detailing the abuses committed and awarded himself points for different types of abuse.

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