

Refugees subject to Malaysia's laws, says Anifah
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Foreign nationals under the protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are still subject to the country's laws, the Dewan Rakyat was told today.

foreign minister anifah amanForeign Minister Anifah Aman said Malaysia had not signed the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and, as such, the foreign nationals were subject to detention if they committed any offence under the Immigration Act.

"However, on humanitarian grounds, these people are handed over to the UNHCR (on request) if they can prove that they are under the protection of the organisation and had obtained verification from it," he said in a written reply to N Gobalakrishnan (PKR-Padang Serai).

Gobalakrishnan had wanted to know the number of refugees from Sri Lanka since January 2009 and the number allowed to remain in Malaysia and the number handed over to the UNHCR.

Anifah explained that the statistics on the number of refugees from Sri Lanka was with the Home Ministry.

He said Malaysia did not recognise the status of refugees but the government, at its discretion, allowed these people to live in the country pending their acceptance by third countries.

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