

'Foreigners allowed to buy Malay land in Langkawi'
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The Kedah state government was today taken to for allowing foreigners to buy and build houses on Malay reserve land in Langkawi.

Mohd Rawi Abdul Hamid (BN-Air Hangat) said according to the 'Malaysia My 2nd Home' scheme, foreigners were only allowed to buy completed houses and not land.

"I want to know whether the state government is aware that there are 50 foreigners who have bought land in Langkawi and built bungalow houses on them," said Mohd Rawi at the Kedah state legislative meeting today.

He revealed that the foreigners had built bungalows on such land and turned them into homestays for business purposes and that such bungalows existed in Ulu Melaka, Kedawang and Air Hangat.

Kedah Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak (PAS-Sungai Limau) said the state government would ensure that foreigners would not use names of Malays to purchase land at the leading holiday and tourist destination.

"We are aware that many foreigners are living in Langkawi and we are making sure such land is not bought by them.

"However, if they use the 'Ali-Baba' (Malay sleeping partner) tactics, it will be difficult to trace or overcome such problems," said Azizan.

He said the Kedah state government had recently rejected a request from foreigners to buy an Island around Langkawi.

Mohd Rawi had also wanted to know what were the short and long term plans for tourism in Langkawi.

State tourism committee chairperson S Manikumar (PKR-Bukit Selambau) said the State Economic Planning Unit was working with the Langkawi Development Authority (Lada) and Tourism Malaysia to develop potential tourist destinations.

He added that as a long term plan (2010-2020), federal agencies including the Tourism Ministry would be used in a smart-partnership, to ensure such plans would produce results.

- Bernama

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