

NEW STRAITS TIMES

Police co-operation with NZ to counter terrorism

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PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia and New Zealand police are set to work closely on countering terrorism.

This was one of the regional issues discussed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his New Zealand counterpart Helen Clark at their meeting here yesterday.

The New Zealand prime minister is in Malaysia with a five-member delegation for a three-day official visit.

Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said New Zealand wanted to sign a memorandum of understanding with Kuala Lumpur for a more co-ordinated exchange of experiences and information on terrorism activities.

"They want co-operation in the operational side from our police. As it is, on the non-operational level, Malaysia being one of the Commonwealth nations is collaborating very well on counter-terrorism under the Southeast Asia Centre.

"It is already good but they want to sign the MoU so that the collaboration will be more co-ordinated, intensified and useful. Our prime minister said he would look into it and that there should not be any problem."

Syed Hamid said the collaboration would be more on the police-to-police level.

"Our high commissioner in New Zealand will liaise with the police there on what the co-operation should entail."

He said Abdullah and Clark also discussed wide-ranging bilateral and international issues, from conflicts in the Middle East to the situation in Sudan and Myanmar.

"As far as bilateral issues are concerned, we do not have anything outstanding, except on how to expand the existing areas of co-operation between Malaysia and New Zealand.

"They also want us to look into the free trade agreement and how we can broaden co-operation in



Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his New Zealand counterpart Helen Clark will discuss regional issues during her three-day official visit here.

education by increasing the number of our students there."

There are about 2,000 Malaysians studying in New Zealand.

Clark also requested Kuala Lumpur to expedite its decision on whether beef from her country could be exported again to Malaysia.

"At present, there are some problems with respect to halal issues as far as meat from New Zealand is concerned.

"Our officers from the Islamic Development Department (Jakim) were there in April. Our Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister (Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin) had also been there.

"The prime minister is waiting for their reports. Clark wants us to

decide fast so that the meat can come in again, say, before Hari Raya Puasa.

"The meat can be imported, subject to its adherence to our requirements and halal certification," Syed Hamid said.

On the United Nations human rights court formed to try leaders alleged to have betrayed their people or abused human rights, Syed Hamid said Kuala Lumpur was of the opinion that such a matter should be judged by their own people or states.

Details on the court such as its terms of reference and width of coverage should be looked into.

"Most importantly, on issues such as corruption or wrongdoing by leaders, these should be judged by their own people."

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Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar
Foreign minister