

## **Hishammuddin Calls On Malaysians In Yemen Not To Put Lives At Risk**

**Bernama**

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 9 (Bernama) -- Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein today advised Malaysians in Yemen not to put their lives at risk by continuing to stay in the conflict-stricken country.

"The decision (of Malaysians refusing to return home) is a high risk decision because we don't know what will happen there.

"We know the situation in Hadhramaut is still peaceful compared to other areas, including Aden, but the unrest in Aden may also spread to other areas.

"So, we call on Malaysians there to give full cooperation to the authorities," he told reporters after the conferment of honorary rank to senior officers of Territorial Army here Thursday.

The minister said that he was informed that some of the 600 Malaysian students in Yemen had decided not to return home, giving various excuses, including having to sit for examinations.

Hishammuddin said their refusal to return home would only make it difficult for the Malaysian authority to take them out should any untoward incidents occur in the conflict-stricken country.

"It's not easy for the authority to enter a conflict area, we have to deploy asset to ensure the route is safe (to take Malaysians out).

"So, I call on those who have made the decision to stay to think again," he said.

Hishammuddin also gave assurance that the students would be allowed to return to Yemen to finish their studies when the situation is safe and stable.

At the same time, he said the ministry was also in the midst of discussing with the Education Ministry the possibility for the students to finish their studies at local public universities.

On the evacuation of Malaysians from Yemen, he said 101 Malaysian citizens had left Hadhramaut this morning and currently in transit in Salalah, Oman, waiting for their flight home.

"Seven others are in Al-Mazyunah, an area at Oman-Yemen border, and having travel document issues, including passports," he said.

However, he said the Malaysian Embassy in Oman was in the midst of solving the issues for

them.

Hishammuddin said the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) was in the discussion with the Malaysian Evacuation Committee, comprising Wisma Putra, National Security Council, Defence Ministry and the Prime Minister's Department in the management of logistics, travel documents and aircraft to take Malaysians home.

At present, he said two RMAF-owned Hercules C-130 aircraft, along with 43 personnel, were in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a preparation to evacuate more Malaysians from Yemen.

A total of 158 Malaysians were reported to have returned home since Tuesday due to the deteriorating security situation in Yemen.

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