

## **Mukhriz wants some action against Myanmar over Rohingya migrant issue**

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The burial today of the remains of 21 human trafficking victims found at Bukit Wang Burma, Wang Kelian last month, is clear evidence that the crime is a serious problem that needs to be addressed.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir who said this, felt that human trafficking was getting increasingly serious, as 21 people lost their lives at the hands of an unscrupulous crime syndicate.

He also suggested punitive measures be taken against Myanmar over the issue of Rohingya migrants, who are among the victims found.

"We hope with their burial today, Asean countries will try to find lasting solutions to this issue of human trafficking," he told reporters after a "tahlil" following the burial of the 19 male and two female victims at the Kampung Tualang cemetery in Jabi, Pokok Sena.

According to Mukhriz, the remains of 85 more victims would be buried in stages after the autopsy reports were completed, with the burial of the second batch of 28 victims scheduled for June 29 at the same cemetery.

He said Asean countries, especially Myanmar, should play their role to reduce or stop the problem of population migration.

Asked whether Myanmar should be penalised or excluded from Asean, Mukhriz said he was not in a position to propose such measures.

However, he added, the government and the Foreign Ministry should consider imposing punitive measures on Myanmar over the Rohingya migrant issue.

Following the discovery of human trafficking syndicates' transit camps in Wang Kelian and the skeletal remains of 106 victims last month, the government launched an operation to catch the perpetrators.

Recently, Home Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the police in collaboration with the Thai authorities had arrested those believed to be the masterminds behind the trafficking syndicates in Malaysia.

### **Cause of death**

The Kedah menteri besar also urged that security at the Malaysia-Thailand border be tightened so that no one could sneak in or out of the border including human trafficking syndicates.

On the victims' cause of death, he said based on the post-mortem findings, it was due to starvation and diseases.

"However, if the victims were held captive without any food, that tantamounts to murder," he said, adding what happened was really saddening.

Mukhriz said he could not imagine the situation the victims went through before they died at the transit camps in Bukit Wang Burma, Wang Kelian. – Bernama, June 22, 2015.

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