

## **Malaysia Studies UK Experience In Addressing Human Trafficking Activities**

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**From Ahmad Fuad Yahya**

MANCHESTER, Nov 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will study the experiences of the United Kingdom (UK) in addressing human trafficking in terms of approach and preventive measures through more stringent laws, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said this included looking at whether the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act (ATIPSOM) currently in force in Malaysia should be tightened in order to be more effective.

"In the UK there is a provision for life imprisonment while in Malaysia the maximum penalty is 10 years imprisonment only. This seems as if Malaysia is still able to tolerate such activities compared to the UK," he told reporters after an evening reception with the Malaysian diaspora here Monday night.

In the afternoon Ahmad Zahid, who is on a four-day work visit to UK, attended a briefing together with the Malaysian delegation besides holding discussions with the UK parties in London on Modern Day Slavery or better known by the term "human trafficking" in Malaysia.

The deputy prime minister said, among others, Malaysia would see the suitability of the need to amend the ATIPSOM instead, not follow the UK system but rather by referring to the UK experience to reduce the number of those falling victims as modern day slaves once related laws tightened.

Ahmad Zahid said during the briefing, the Malaysian delegation was informed of the approach used by the UK government to control and reduce the trafficking of people as forced labour or sex slaves by involving non governmental organisations (NGOs) in the rehabilitation.

"In the UK, they engage the NGOs to give comfort to the victims who are undergoing rehabilitation.

"We are also informed of how prevention is done to stop these victims from entering the UK besides forging cooperation with embassies and consulates so that those intending to enter can be blocked in advance," he said.

Another approach in the UK, he said, was the use of psychologists and some of the victims from the country of origin to help solve the trauma suffered by the victims.

"These elements cannot be implemented in Malaysia because the victims do not come forward to complain except when there is a report to the authorities in Malaysia," he said.

Meanwhile at the reception with the Malaysian diaspora, Ahmad Zahid reminded Malaysians abroad to be always grateful for having the opportunity to continue their studies outside the country and to protect Malaysia's good name.

They were also asked to be rational in the analysis of information received about developments in Malaysia, particularly from the alternative and social media because most of the information is half-truths and not based on the ethics of journalism.

Almost 200 Malaysian students studying in the UK attended the evening reception.

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