

## **Ahmad Zahid to Attend Bali Process Wednesday**

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**By Azeman Ariffin**

JAKARTA, March 21 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi will attend the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime in Bali, Indonesia, on Wednesday.

A media statement released by the Deputy Prime Minister's Office today said Ahmad Zahid will deliver a ministerial statement at the conference.

The Bali Process, founded in 2002, has effectively raised regional awareness of the consequences of people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime, and developed and implemented strategies and practical cooperation in response.

More than 48 countries and organisations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as a number of observer countries and international agencies participate in this voluntary forum.

This is the only regional platform in East Asia and Pacific that deals with migration-related issues and the Ministerial Conference will focus on the general discussion on current challenges, trends and responses of irregular movement of persons in the region.

The conference may also consider a mechanism for more timely consultation among members in responding to emerging issues.

In Bali, Ahmad Zahid is also scheduled to meet Australian Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton to discuss the ongoing cooperation with Malaysia on transnational crime issues and on the current issue of an influx of irregular migrants in the region.

Other meetings arranged for Ahmad Zahid are with Netherlands Foreign Minister Bert Koenders and UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection Volker Turk.

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