

## **At Least 127 Malaysians Stranded At Airports in Turkey**

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**From D. Arul Rajoo**

ULAANBAATAR (Mongolia), July 16 (Bernama) -- At least 127 Malaysians are now stranded at two airports in Turkey, following a military coup attempt and an enforcement of a no-fly zone in the country, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said of that number, 27 Malaysians from the Kelantan Islamic Foundation were stranded at the Ataturk International Airport in Istanbul while over 100 Malaysians, on transit after an umrah trip, were now at the Esenboga International Airport in Ankara.

He said most of those stranded were either on transit to a third country such as Egypt or returning from performing umrah.

"These figures are what we have got so far (as of 12pm Malaysian time). They are stranded after the no-fly zone and flight cancellations are declared in the country," he told a media conference with Malaysian journalists here who were covering the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit which ended Saturday.

According to him, Wisma Putra would coordinate with the Malaysian Embassy in Ankara to ensure the welfare and safety of Malaysians were protected.

A military statement issued by Turkish media on Friday said the armed forces had fully seized power in the country, but Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said early Saturday the coup attempt had failed, urging people to protect democracy.

Zahid also advised Malaysians, including students in Turkey not to leave their residence for the sake of their own safety.

"They also have to follow instructions issued by the Malaysian embassy there. Officials will contact them, if they have not been contacted, they have to contact the embassy," said the deputy prime minister.

Following the restive situation in Turkey, Zahid asked Malaysians who intended to go to that country to postpone or cancel their travel plans for the moment.

Malaysian Students Association in Turkey (MASAT), in a Facebook posting, said MASAT would issue an official statement on the incident after updating information on Malaysian

students there.

"It is hoped that everybody will be careful in selecting news and refer to verified news from trusted local news portal (in Turkey)," it said.

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