

Malaysia to Study Sri Lanka's Request for Deportation of Prisoners

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COLOMBO, (Sri Lanka) July 21 (Bernama) -- The Malaysia government will look into Sri Lanka's request to have all Sri Lankan prisoners in Malaysia be deported to their country of origin.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Home Minister, said the Sri Lankan authority was still negotiating the matter with their Malaysian counterparts as there were 38 Sri Lankan prisoners currently serving their time in Malaysia under the Immigration Act, with 12 others still being held on remand.

"These 50 Sri Lankan nationals were mostly arrested for overstaying in Malaysia or probably for committing other offences under the Immigration Act," he told the Malaysian media here.

Ahmad Zahid arrived here today for a two-day working visit to Sri Lanka.

Earlier, Ahmad Zahid held meetings with Sri Lanka's Minister of Home Affairs Vajira Abeywardena and Minister of Foreign Employment Thalatha Atukorale at their respective offices here.

Commenting further, Ahmad Zahid said seven other Sri Lankan prisoners were currently serving their time in Malaysia under the Dangerous Drugs Act, while two others still on remand.

Ahmad Zahid said Sri Lanka had also sought Malaysia's advice to modernise the issuance of high quality identity card for their citizens, as being practiced in Malaysia.

He said Malaysia had also made official invitation to Sri Lanka president to visit Malaysia on Dec 16 as a return visit for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's visit to Sri Lanka.

Ahmad Zahid said a memorandum of understanding on various immigration aspects was expected to be inked during the president's visit.

"The draft of the agreement has been mutually agreed...I think it would easily be finalised

and signed," he said, adding that among the aspects were related to student visa and skilled and semi-skilled Sri Lankan workers in Malaysia.

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