

Immigration Course Duration to Be 6 Months, Says DPM

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PORT DICKSON, Oct 22 (Bernama) -- The duration of the basic course conducted by the Immigration Department for its officers will be six months compared to only 34 days currently, says Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

"The extension is necessary as the work scope of Immigration officers has become more challenging. The course duration is similar to those of the Malaysian Armed Forces and Royal Malaysian Police, that is, six to nine months.

"The module also has to be added, with emphasis on discipline, legislation, and spiritual and mental aspects," he told reporters after the passing out parade for Immigration assistant superintendents Grade KP29 here, Saturday.

Ahmad Zahid who is also Home Minister said the improvement of the module could present a new image and alter the society's perception of the Immigration department.

"The Immigration Department's responsibility is not simply to handle passports. Its enforcement officers have to be in the frontline, though not in the battlefield but involved in border security nevertheless.

"As an enforcement front liner, the department's officers are not just stationed at the air, land and sea gateways but also involved in the enforcement aspect of the country's assets, which requires investigating and sharing of information with other enforcement agencies to prevent unauthorised entry by elements that could undermine the country's security, even though the latter may just be illegal immigrants or foreign workers," he said.

To a suggestion that whistle-blowers on undocumented foreigners be given a reward, Ahmad Zahid said he had not thought about it.

"I have not thought about the matter...I will discuss it with the Home Ministry secretary-general and Immigration director-general," he said.

Meanwhile, 95 immigration officers who completed their course today will start work on Monday.

The recipient of the Immigration Director-General's Award was cadet officer Muzafarudin Samsudin.

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