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Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi

By Dr. Zuraini binti Ab Hamid (/authors/dr-zuraini-binti-ab-hamid) - September 1, 2017 @ 11:09am

DEPUTY Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi expressed the country's aim to be placed in Tier 1 of countries in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report by 2020. Malaysia is now in Tier 2.

The report was initiated by the United States' State Department in 2001 to monitor and increase worldwide efforts to reduce human trafficking.

Stopping human trafficking

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Most countries are examined and placed in Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 twice a year. To be in Tier 1, the government must comply with Section 108 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and "3P" paradigm outlined by the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which aims to prevent the crime, protect victims and prosecute perpetrators.

By looking at last year and this year's report, the assessment stipulated for the tier ranking of a country is focused on victims as depicted by seven out of 10 elements in the document.

Failure to comply with the assessment will cause a country to be ranked in a lower tier and be subjected to political and monetary sanctions.

Malaysia has been seeking to be in Tier 1 since 2004.

The country needs to put more efforts into protecting trafficking victims.

Victims should be provided with a better rehabilitation system that includes a comfortable place to stay with activities covering their education, skills, and physical and psychological management.

In this case, non-governmental organisations should be allowed to cooperate with the government to ease the government's burden in taking care of victims.

Apart from that, there should be compensation for victims, which judges should consider.

The government should reconsider granting permits and visas to qualified victims, as practised by Australia.

This will be a motivation for victims to cooperate with law enforcers to fight for their rights, especially when cases involve a long trial.

The government must cooperate with other countries to prevent the crime by educating victims, starting from their countries of origin.

The laws in the origin, transit, and destination countries must prevent victims from being exploited.

It is essential for countries of origin to set laws for their citizens before they are allowed to travel abroad.

In addition, transit or destination countries must impose strict laws on foreigners before allowing them to enter or remain in the country.

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