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Zahid to raise enforcement agencies' coordination deficiency

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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BAGAN DATUK: The lack of coordination among enforcement agencies at the Malaysia-Thailand border is one of the issues that will be raised at the next National Security Council meeting, says Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

"I will raise the matter in the next meeting on Tuesday. I agree with the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC), which recently highlighted that there was a lack of coordination among the agencies," he said, adding that they included the armed forces, police, Anti-Smuggling Unit and National Anti-Drugs Agency.

He said the interview that a Malay-language newspaper conducted with EAIC chairman Datuk Yaacob Md Sam should be

taken seriously.

"There are border areas which need sophisticated equipment, such as drones, radar and closed-circuit television cameras (CCTV) to stop intruders. I want to give a positive response to the interview because I have raised the matter several times at meetings, especially when border security is raised."

Zahid, who is also home minister, said he would discuss the matter with Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein.

"We may also seek the cooperation of the Kedah, Kelantan, Perak and Perlis governments to address this issue," he said, after presenting Deepavali contributions to more than 800 people here yesterday.

Zahid said about 35 per cent of

the country's borders was exposed to transnational crimes.

"I agree with the EAIC chairman that smugglers not only pass through the ICQS (Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security) Complex, but also through the barbed-wire fencing which is not properly maintained. Apart from scheduled operations, better coordination among the agencies is needed to strengthen border security, like what we are doing with the Eastern Sabah Security Command (Esscom)," said Zahid, who jointly chairs the Eastern Sabah Security Zone with Sabah Chief Minister Tan Sri Musa Aman.

EAIC said CCTV recordings showed that smuggling was being carried out under the noses of enforcement personnel at the border.