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'I'm glad to be home'

LUCKY

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Former drug mules welcomed back by families

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"I AM glad to be home, but I regret not listening to my mother's advice," said Nor Suzanna Azmi, a former drug mule.

Nor Suzanna, 36, arrived home with her Peruvian husband, Garlin Lever Quispe Sanchez (who used the name "Yusof" after their marriage) and two sons, Muhammad Duler Akasyah Salas Azmi and Garlin Junior Quispe Azmi @ Huzaifah.

She broke into tears when she met her mother Nor Liana Maarof, 58, whom she had not seen for 12 years, at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

Nor Liana welcomed her daughter home with *pulut kuning* (yellow glutinous rice) and *sambal ikan bilis*.

"We have done everything within our means to bring my daughter home, including seeking help from Umno.

"After performing my prayers, I always pray for her safe return. My prayers were answered when my daughter met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak in 2016."

Twelve years ago, when Suzanna told her mother that she had received an offer from a friend to go abroad, her mother advised her not to go.

"I was worried and asked her to be careful as it might be a scam.

"One day, she went missing. We searched for her everywhere, and finally received news that she was in Peru," Nor Liana said.

Plans to bring home victims of international drug syndicates started from efforts by the Umno Welfare Bureau (BiKum), Wisma Putra and the Malaysian embassy in Peru, with help from its ambassador, Chuah Teong Ban.

Nor Suzanna, then 24, was detained at the Jorge Chávez International Airport with 2kg of drugs in her bag when she wanted to leave for Madrid.

Nor Suzanna advised Malaysians to be careful and not fall victim to promises and offers from international drug syndicates.

"I am lucky as BiKum helped me. Otherwise, I would still be stranded there (in Peru).

"In a way, I was lucky to have been stranded in Peru, not in another country, because I might not be alive otherwise."

Present to welcome Nor Suzanna home was BiKum chairman Datuk Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah, who is a Supreme Council member and Lenggong member of parliament.

Noor Azimah Sapie, 38, who had the same predicament as Nor Suzanna, also returned home with her daughter, Qistina Maisara Alarcon Sapie, 8. Her Peruvian husband, Emilio Ignacio Alarcon Leon, (who used the name "Osman" after their marriage) will arrive later.

She said she had lived in fear of being caught as an illegal immigrant in Peru.

"I do not have to hide anymore. At that time, I was scared to leave the house as I did not have a permit, thus I had to rely on my husband for almost everything.

"I am grateful to have a caring husband, who is willing to do whatever it takes to ease the stress including paying for my visa."