

Zahid Hamidi: Policies to tackle drugs need to be reviewed regularly

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LANGKAWI: Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Zahid Hamidi has urged policies to combat drugs be reviewed regularly to ensure their effectiveness.

He said there must be a consideration of current and anticipated challenges posed by illicit drugs and learn from past mistakes to move forward.

"The way we do business today may not be appropriate anymore and therefore our policies must be reviewed from time to time

"To get different results we must dare to change," he said when opening the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting On Drug Matters today.

Zahid also called upon ASEAN member states to continue to share knowledge, experiences, best practices and research outcomes on tackling the drug issue.

"A clearinghouse, or some sort of mechanism, is really needed for ASEAN member states to highlight best practices, he said.

Zahid too called for ASEAN to have a clear direction, collective action and a firm position in addressing drug problems in the region.

"In the upcoming UNGASS 2016, we must voice out our common position on the world drug problem and the way we deal with drug problems in the region," he said referring to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in April next year.

Meanwhile, he also said the Home Ministry has issued a show cause letter to the security firm which hired a security guard who is the main suspect in the rape and murder of a schoolgirl.

Ahmad Zahid said the letter was sent a day after the gruesome incident on Sunday.

"The licence will be cancelled," he said when asked what happens if the company did not reply in the stipulated period during a press conference yesterday.

In the 7.30pm incident, Intan Suraya Mawardi, 17, was found by her father with her throat slit at the family flat in Teluk Kumbar, Penang.

A 20-year-old security guard at the school she goes to has been detained and remanded until Nov 1 to assist investigators.

The suspect was reportedly nabbed earlier this year for possessing a small amount of ganja and he was also detained with his friends in 2014 for possessing tools suspected to be used for house break-ins.

He was not charged for both offences with reports stated the amount of ganja was too small for police to press charges while there was no evidence he and his friends used the tools for criminal acts.

Zahid, who is also Home Minister, said he viewed the incident seriously as the matter concerned the loss of life.

He said the onus on screening potential workers laid on security firms and pointed out all such companies were required to undergo a certification process so they would have known the regulations.

“The course is also compulsory for the directors and shareholders of security companies.

“The security companies should not blame the Home Ministry, the ministry will never compromise on this,” he said, adding “I am firm but fair.”