

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

## 'Porous border a challenge for security agencies'

**PUTRAJAYA:** The country's porous border poses a challenge for security enforcement agencies.

Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin yesterday said: "As I have said many times, our border is extremely porous and it is easy (for illegal immigrants) to enter the country using 'jalan tikus' (illegal routes).

"We have, however, carried out initiatives to address the problem while curbing human trafficking and abuse of workers.

"Despite these initiatives, there are those (illegal immigrants) who still manage to enter the

country illegally using rat lanes," he said after attending the Immigration Day celebration here yesterday.

Present were Immigration Department director-general Datuk Seri Khairul Dzaimie Daud and Deputy Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Razarudin Husin.

Hamzah was asked to comment on the United States' State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report, which continues to rank Malaysia in its lowest tier.

The report said the government did not fully meet the minimum standards and did not make significant efforts to eliminate

human trafficking.

Hamzah said the report was made based on "subjective" assessment and that it might have been influenced by some employers who had exploited their workers.

He, however, said the country was committed to ending human trafficking, but this required co-operation from all parties, including employers.

"I appeal to employers to help us to eliminate human trafficking. If there are people (immigrants) who apply to work with you, please check if they entered the country legally.



Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin handing an award to the Immigration Department's Records and Information Technology Division director Rosfan Hashim at the Immigration Day celebration in Putrajaya yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

"Alert the authorities if you know about immigrants entering the country illegally so that we can rescue them and prevent them from becoming victims of human trafficking."

He said a master plan for border control was in the pipeline. It would include the use of the latest technology and procurement of more assets to monitor the border, he added.