

Immigration Dept to oversee Sabah detention depots

KOTA KINABALU: The operations of all four temporary detention centres for illegal immigrants in Sabah will now come under the Immigration Department, says National Security Council (NSC) state director Sharifah Sitti Saleha Habib Yussof.

The four depots – Kota Kinabalu, Papar, Sandakan and Tawau –

under the management of the state NSC were handed over officially to Sabah Immigration Department director Datuk Sade Muhamad during a simple ceremony here yesterday.

Sharifah said that unlike other states, Sabah's temporary detention centres came under the Federal Special Task Force (STF) for illegal

immigrants that coordinated with other relevant agencies in the detention and deportation of illegal immigrants.

On Oct 14, the NSC agreed that the immigration depots in Sabah would be handled by the Immigration Department.

Prior to the NSC decision, the National Committee on Foreign

Workers chaired by the Prime Minister on Sept 6 had agreed to a recommendation by Sabah's technical committee on foreign workers to request that the NSC allow the Immigration Department to assume full responsibility in the operations of the depots.

"The move to give the Immigration Department the authority to man-

age the depots in the state is a strategic step as it is experienced and has the mechanism to manage such centres," said Sharifah.

She expressed confidence that the Immigration Department was in a better position to coordinate and improve the deportation process of illegal immigrants with the handover.