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Call to change tactics to combat social ills

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs.- Government and private agencies need to change their strategy in implementing measures designed to curb social ills.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman said numerous efforts to combat social ills have been taken with controversial effect and a different approach was needed to ensure success.

He said the call for moderation by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the recent Umno General Assembly should be the basis for action.

"Social problems should be tackled at its source," he said, "thus not only should we prevent our people from getting involved in socially unhealthy activities, we also have to stop the activities from taking place."

He was speaking at the launch of the Social Ills Awareness seminar organised by the Islamic Development Department of the Prime Minister's Department at the Holiday Inn City Centre Hotel here today.

He said Government agencies could play a role by ensuring that they exercised their discretionary powers to revoke or prevent licences being issued for business activities encouraging unhealthy activities.

Abdul Hamid added this would assist the activities of the existing religious departments in the implementation of syariah laws.

He said the social problems happening now were the result of social changes.

"Our values changed through time, family values were abandoned and old traditions were done away with. Society became more individualistic and the people adopted a more mind-my-own-business attitude.

"The changes also caused people to become less inhibited," he said.

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