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RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS SHOULD HELP CREATE AWARENESS ON DANGER OF HIV/AIDS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- Religious elements should help create awareness on the danger of HIV and AIDS in efforts to tackle the problem, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Abdul Hamid Zainal Abidin today.

He said there seemed to be a lack of awareness among Malaysians on the deadly disease.

"Religious elements should play the role of making the general public aware of the danger of HIV/AIDS," he told reporters after officiating the sixth biennial meeting of the Malaysian AIDS Council here.

He said it was important also for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to work together with the government in combating the disease.

President of the council, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir meanwhile said the number of people infected with HIV/AIDS had reached 45,000 compared to about 6,000 when the council was set up in 1992.

This could have a serious negative impact on society if Malaysians were not responsive to the problem, she said.

"We need to find new and more creative ideas to educate society and eliminate the stigma and discrimination against HIV/AIDS patients," she said.

-- BERNAMA

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