

Islamic State threat not a manipulation or fiction, says Zahid Hamidi
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Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today stressed that the threat posed by the Islamic State (IS) militant group in Malaysia was not a manipulation, publicity stunt or fiction.

"I want to tell the people that the IS threat is very real," he said.

Zahid advised the people to always be alert in open areas such as entertainment centres, houses of non-Muslim worship and places of public interest.

He said the government, through the security forces, was always on the alert to ensure the country's security is assured.

"The Royal Malaysia Police, through the Special Branch Counter-Terrorism Division, always monitors various mediums, including social media, to curb the IS influence in the country," he said.

Zahid was speaking at a press conference after handing over 130 heads of cattle to mosques, suraus and government agencies in Bagan Datoh in conjunction with the Aidiladha celebration on Monday.

Besides Zahid, other donors of the cattle included private corporations, among them HeiTech Padu Bhd, Naza Group and MyEG Services Bhd.

Also present was Perak Sports, Communications and Multimedia Committee chairperson Shahrul Zaman Yahya, who is also state assemblyperson for Rungkup.

Zahid, who is also home minister, was commenting on newspaper reports today on the action of Syrian-based Malaysian head for IS, Muhamad Wannady Mohamad Jedi, who repeated his threat to create chaos in this country.

'We know about their Katibah Nusantara'

"We know followers (of IS) in Malaysia want to carry out the instructions leading to Katibah Nusantara, which is supposedly a Muslim nation in the region covering Malaysia, Indonesia, southern Thailand, southern Philippines and maybe even Singapore and Brunei.

"Through the cooperation of security forces in Asean nations, either the police or Armed Forces, we are always sharing information on what Wanndy is doing... we know about the instructions he issued are reflecting those of the IS leadership in Syria and Iraq," he said.

He added that acts such as bombings were to ensure Wanndy remained in the top IS leadership, and contributed to the violence in the region.

Zahid also said the people in the country who joined the militant group did not have strong religious or educational background.

"They are people who are frustrated over something which only they know. So this disappointment is translated into a form of escapism," he said.

- *Bernama*