

Religious Schools Not Hotbeds For Producing Extremists - Jamil Khir
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BALIK PULAU, March 2 (Bernama) -- Religious schools are not hotbeds for turning out recruits for extremist activities or involvement in the IS militant group, said Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom.

He said there was a perception lately that religious schools were churning out extremists for the IS militant group's activities in Syria and Iraq.

"Those who were involved in such activities were not from the religious field. Less than 10 per cent of those involved were from the religious field. This activity is a result of the emergence of the social and online media on Youtube, Instagram, Facebook and others.

"We see via the online media, the effort to recruit them, by targeting men or women, to be involved in this activity," he told reporters after opening Sekolah Agama Hidayatul Islamiah on Pulau Betong near here, Monday.

He said, on the other hand, religious schools could instil the educational foundation in a more systematic and effective manner in the students and allow the young generation to steep themselves in knowledge in greater details.

Religious schools, he said were the apt places to give the best exposure and mechanism for the current generation to understand if whatever is being carried out contravened Islam or otherwise.

Jamil Khir said the perception and issues which were often harped about indirectly confused the children who were studying religion.

He said religious schools in the country were free from the influence of the ideology connected with the IS militant group, and were still on track to turn out Islamic scholars.

Meanwhile, in KUALA LUMPUR, Yayasan Pembangunan Pondok Malaysia (YPPM) executive chairman Datuk Dr Mashitah Ibrahim said studies at religious schools were still based on Islamic laws and teachings and rules of the Ahli Sunnah Wal Jammah (Group which adheres to the Quran, the way the prophet lived his life and matters espoused by his comrades, and opposition to heresy) whilst the IS ideology had deviated far from the teachings of Islam.

She said if there were cases which involved teachers from religious schools in the IS group, they were isolated, because there was only one known case compared to the number of religious schools nationwide.

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