

**Madrasah And Pondok Religious Schools In Kedah Not Involved In Militant Activities - Kedah Police Chief**  
**Bernama**  
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ALOR SETAR, March 5 (Bernama) -- Madrasah and Pondok Religious Schools in Kedah are not involved in deviant religious teachings or spreading militant ideology.

Kedah police chief Datuk Zamri Yahya said investigations and surveillance showed that the individual from Kedah who was involved in militant activities, including in Syria, acted in his personal capacity.

"Our investigation revealed that thus far no Madrasah or Pondok Religious Schools in Kedah are involved in militant activities or deviant teachings. Those involved are individuals who acted in their own capacity," he told Bernama when contacted Thursday.

However, the Kedah Special Branch will continue to monitor the spread of such activities, especially when it was revealed that a number of individuals from Kedah were in Syria in the name of Jihad.

Zamri said police investigations showed that militant activities, be it individual or groups like IS (Islamic State) or other forms of activities were through social media sites like Facebook.

"Many who joined such activities were influenced by social media sites like Facebook through the internet," he said.

When asked how many Kedahans were involved in militant activities in Syria, including IS, Zamri did not reveal any specific details.

Yesterday, police released the identity of two youngsters from Kedah and Melaka who were believed to have gone to Syria and stationed at Raqqa, which is said to be the 'capital' of the IS.

As for Madrasah Nurul Hidayah in Kuala Ketil, Baling that was claimed to have been linked with deviant teachings, the Kedah police chief said police investigations thus far had not found any link.

"So far nothing," he said of the Madrasah that The New York Times had through a documentary "The Jihadist In Our Family", alleged that the Madrasah was spreading deviant teachings by urging children to fulfill their obligation of Jihad (holy war).

The Madrasah Nurul Hidayah which has 180 students was started by two brothers - Mohd Zainon Ariffin and his younger brother Mohd Lotfi Ariffin who was killed in Syria last year during an air raid by the Bashar Al Assad army.

Mohd Lotfi was the former Dewan Ulama Kedah Information chief and believed to have been involved in militant group in Syria known as Afnad Al-Sham.

Mohd Zainon during an interview with Bernama recently said the Madrasah was never involved in militant activities or teachings and that no students had gone to Syria for Jihad.

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