

## **Muslims Should Unite To Uphold Sanctity Of Islam – DPM**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- Muslims in the country should unite and defend the sanctity of Islam and avoid the religion from being ridiculed, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said when Muslims, especially Malays, are weak, it opens opportunity for others to ridicule the religion.

"If we (Muslims) split and differ in opinion, people will not respect us. We have to learn to respect our religion and race, before we want others to respect our religion and race," he added.

He said this when opening a gathering of martial arts instructors of the Malaysian National Silat Association (Pesaka) at the Putra World Trade Centre, here Saturday.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Home Minister, reminded Muslims, especially the Malays, to set aside any intention of power struggle or to win any post in a party or organisation, but to unite towards upholding the sanctity of Islam.

He said a leader who could be likened to a thorn in the flesh should be removed for the Malay race to remain to be respected and held in high esteem.

"We do not want to be like the Red Indians which remain only in history," he added.

On quarters ridiculing Islam, Ahmad Zahid said the responsibility of defending the religion should not be left to the police, but the role should be borne by all Malays.

"There may be one or two who are insolent and they should be taught a lesson.

"This is not a threat. We respect other religions and races, but what if they do not respect us because of our weaknesses," he added.

On Pesaka, Ahmad Zahid said he would table to the cabinet the memorandum by the association on 'silat' to be recognised as the national arts of self defence.

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