

**RDC3 Begins Operation in May - Ahmad Zahid
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26 (Bernama) -- The Regional Digital Counter-Messaging Communications Centre (RDC3) hosted by Malaysia will begin operations on May 1, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said the Malaysian government had approved the initial allocation of RM200 million for the purpose.

"We will use the template available in the United States (US) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and we will establish the centre in Malaysia," he said at a media conference after closing the International Conference on Deradicalisation and Countering Violent Extremism 2016 (IDC), here Tuesday.

Malaysia previously was chosen by the US as the host for the regional digital centre to fight the extremist group and recognised the country's commitment in tackling terrorism.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also the Home Minister, said that at least three different agencies would handle the centre.

Earlier, the Principal Assistant Secretary of the Security and Public Order Division of the Home Ministry, Zamihan Mat Zin Al-Ghari said the process of creating the centre was entering the final stage before full operations very soon.

On Malaysia's rehabilitation program which would be adopted by other countries including the US, he said the program aimed to rehabilitate the extremist group.

"It was created and modified according to the changing time and situation. It was implemented ever since the Communist threat in 1948 and it had also been modified during the time of the Al-Maunah, Jemaah Islamiyah and Darul Islamiyah," he said.

He said that the rehabilitation program had been translated into Arabic, French and English and turned into a book and circulated to participants of the IDC 2016.

The IDC 2016 which concluded today was participated by ministers from the ASEAN member countries and Malaysia's nine Strategic Partners namely Australia, France, Italy, Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States.

Meanwhile, in his closing speech at the two-day international conference Ahmad Zahid said, it is imperative for nations to have in place more effective strategies and commit even more resources to counter radical narratives.

"Increase humanitarian assistance, prevent the spread of violent extremism, including but not limited to digital platforms and the internet," he said.

He said there is a need for global community to come together to share expertise and intelligence, as well as, forging a closer regional cooperation in fighting against all forms of radicalism.

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