

Malaysians Must Strengthen Tertiary Education Culture – Ahmad Zahid

Bernama

Jan 31, 2016

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SIBU, Jan 31 (BERNAMA) -- The culture of tertiary education, coupled with life-long learning can be strengthened if families are committed to having at least a graduate each, says Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

The deputy prime minister said this applied to families in the remotest of longhouses or rural villages and settlements in the country, adding it was important for the country to be progressive by 2020 and beyond.

"By then, we should have at least 60 per cent of our people as graduates, and who should keep and practise good Asian values. Thus, I urge the people to make life-long learning a culture, as well.

"Sad to say, we have people now who are educated but not learned. I say they are not learned because they do not have these values," he said when addressing staff and undergraduates of the University College of Technology (UCTS) here today.

Ahmad Zahid said while the country had first-class facilities and infrastructures at its universities, it must also have first-class mentality and attitude and in terms of contribution to society from among its professors and students.

He said towards achieving this, all Malaysians must move forward as one, specialising in a particular field and be the best in that.

"In the early 60s, countries like Korea used to learn from us. We even beat them in football.

"Now, Malaysia is lagging behind, including in football where Korea is among the world's top soccer nations and producer of world-class Samsung electronics goods and handphones, and cars.

"Alas, we are still busy entertaining our differences, fighting one another. We are still struggling when we should ideally move forward in unison," he added.

Ahmad Zahid urged Malaysians to begin planning for 2027 when the country celebrated its 100th independence anniversary.

On a lighter note, he said he was prepared to be a visiting professor at UCTS when he eventually, retires from politics.

"I am very impressed with the university. It is really well-thought of, planned and structured.

"It also has achieved the very rare distinction of a platinum-rated Green Building Index classification," he noted.

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