

Zahid: Malaysian Deradicalisation Programme the Best in the World
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KUCHING, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- The deradicalisation programme for convicts involved in extremist, radical and Daesh movements has received very encouraging results, which are recognised internationally.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the programme, implemented under the Malaysian Prisons Department blue ocean strategy (NBOS) on 130 convicts from the group, achieved a high rehabilitation rate of 97 per cent.

He said the convicts were separated during detention to prevent them from influencing other convicts when undergoing the programme and the 97 percent rehabilitated ones did not return to their activities.

"This is because the department did not conduct the rehabilitation alone but sought the cooperation of many quarters including Jakim (Malaysia Islamic Affairs Department), psychology experts, NGOs and others.

"As a result, it makes Malaysia as an example of the most successful country in the deradicalization programme, the best example in the world," he said in his speech at the 226th Prisons Day celebration at Padang Merdeka here, Saturday.

"We are not praising ourselves, this is a recognition by the United Nations, Interpol and others, which is why Malaysia hosted the International Deradicalisation Conference last month," he said.

In addition, Ahmad Zahid said the department's correctional programmes were very successful when the number of convicts returning to crime was negligible.

He said prisons should also not separate the convicts from the rest of society because they also had to get on with their lives after completing their sentences and (prisons) should help them in their return to society.

There were convicts, who were trained to produce products to be marketed, and some were paid a sum of money, which were kept and to be given back to them for their use after leaving prison, he said.

He said the department's products, which were made by convicts, such as songket cloth, batik, cakes and bread were marketed last year, fetching RM32 million, the best thus far.

The successes had also prompted Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem to request that all correctional programmes for convicts be expanded to prisons in Sarawak.

Ahmad Zahid said he would make a request to the Malaysian Armed Forces chief under NBOS on the

possibility of stationing the department's correctional centres at army camps in Sarawak.

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