

## **DPM Zahid Announces US\$100,000 Donation for Islamic Centre in Colombo**

**Bernama**

**July 22, 2016**

**From R. Ravichandran**

COLOMBO, July 22 (Bernama) -- Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi today announced a US\$100,000 (RM406,500) donation from a foundation to establish an Islamic and Malay centre in this capital of Sri Lanka.

"The centre can help more than 70,000 Muslims and Malays to gather and conduct various activities such as learning the Malay language," he told Malaysian journalists at the end of his two-day visit to the South Asian country.

Earlier, Ahmad Zahid met representatives and members of the Sri Lankan branch of the Malay World Islamic World (DMDI) based in Melaka.

He said DMDI Sri Lanka had sought the assistance of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) and the Malaysian Ministry of Education to teach the Malay language to the Malays in Sri Lanka.

He also said that he would discuss with DBP, Gapena (the Federal of National Writers Associations of Malaysia) and other associations on how to assist the Sri Lankan Malays, such as by sending Malay language teachers.

"They are determined to study Malay and revive the language and Malay culture. I am confident this can be done ... I will also help them in a personal capacity," he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the Malays in Sri Lanka had originated from Malaysia.

He said many of them were engaged in business and they strived to be middle-income earners who could contribute to national development and the development of the language and Islam.

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