

## **Attend Preparatory Course in Malaysia before Studying In West Asia - DPM**

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**From Elmi Rizal Elias**

MADINAH, Oct 14 (Bernama) -- Malaysian students wishing to study in universities in West Asia will be required to attend preparatory courses locally to master the Arabic language.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said such students would undergo the course at identified institutions before being sent overseas.

He said the preparatory course in Malaysia would reduce the cost for students apart from saving time.

"The government has decided students who wanted to study in West Asia needed to attend pre-diploma and pre-degree courses at institutions in Malaysia.

"The idea of preparatory course was mooted based on the demand of students, parents and organisations involved," he said when speaking at a luncheon with about 250 members of the Malaysian community, including students here on Friday.

Also present were his wife, Datin Seri Hamidah Khamis, Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tan Sri Pandikar Amin Mulia and the Malaysian ambassador to Saudi Arabia Datuk Zainol Rahim Zainuddin.

Ahmad Zahid, who is Home Minister, is currently on a five-day visit to Saudi Arabia until Sunday.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the government was now looking at 10 to 15 maahad tahfiz (Al-Quran memorising centres) to conduct the courses adapted from West Asian university curriculum.

"This is a major decision. A formal announcement will be made after negotiations have been finalised with the maahad tahfiz," he said.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Zahid also announced a personal contribution totalling 100,000 Riyals (about RM112,000), involving 30,000 Riyal (about RM33,500) each to Malaysian students in Riyadh, Medinah and Makkah.

Apart from that, a contribution of 10,000 Riyals was channeled via the Malaysian ambassador to Saudi Arabia to assist Malaysian students facing financial problems while studying in Saudi Arabia.

Earlier Ahmad Zahid and his delegation offered Friday prayers at the Nabawi Mosque here.

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