

Huge Allocations for Religious Education Shows Importance Government Gives To Islam - Ahmad Zahid
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ALOR GAJAH, Oct 29 (Bernama) -- The huge allocations for religious schools, tahfiz classes and pondok schools in the 2017 Budget is proof of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak the government's commitment to uphold the sanctity of Islam, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi.

He said Islam as a progressive religion must be nurtured, elevated and advanced further so that it becomes a complete way of life for Muslims in the country while at the same time not sidelining other religions.

"We must strive to elevate Islam further but other religions we must also respect, in order for our religion to be respected we must respect other religions.

"However, I fear that if Muslims are not united, it will be like bubbles in the ocean which will disappear once hit by waves. There can be differences in opinions, but this must be dealt with tact, wisdom and decorum," he said.

He said this when closing Sekolah Menengah Imtiaz's Special Ulul Albab Programme here today.

The event was opened by Melaka Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Mohd Khalil Yaakob

In the 2017 Budget tabled by Najib on Oct 21, RM30 million was set aside for tahfiz schools to produce more Muslims of high calibre, while government aided religious schools and registered pondok schools will get a total of RM50 million each for upgrading and maintenance.

Ahmad Zahid implored Muslims to heed the lessons of the disunity among Muslims as was happening in Syria and Yemen and also the 'Arab Spring' so that the malaise did not spread to the Nusantara (Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei) region.

He said that of the 1.8 billion Muslims in the world, 350 million were in the Nusantara region, thus making it the most suitable place for an Islamic renaissance.

"I remember reading a hadith on Islamic renaissance that it will not begin in the Middle East, but in East Asia, in this context the Nusantara region can be where it begins.

"So Malaysia, insya-Allah, can be the centre for this renaissance. Malaysia is one of the most advanced Islamic countries and is a reference point to develop Islam in a progressive and moderate way in a plural society," he said.

He added that education in the country combined both worldly knowledge and on the hereafter so as to produce majestic individuals and in the process strengthens propagation of Islam.

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