

Security threat now spreads to west coast

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KOTA KINABALU: Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the security threat to Sabah has now spread to the west coast and no longer confined to the east coast of the State.

"Previously, the threat was only in the east coast, but security patrols in the east coast have been tightened.

"The security challenge in Sabah now is not only confined to the east coast but has widened to the west coast as well," he said at the opening of the Security & Public Order Seminar (SEKAM) 2016 at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) here yesterday.

Also present yesterday Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Haji Aman who is also the joint chairman of Eastern Sabah Security Command (ESSCOM), Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Raymond Tan Shu Kiah, Home Ministry's secretary-general Datuk Seri Alwi Ibrahim, State Secretary Tan Sri Sukarti Wakiman, Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Noor Rashid Ibrahim, UMS vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah and Sabah Police Commissioner Datuk Abdul Rashid Harun.

And, at the event, Ahmad Zahid who

is also Home Minister witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Institute of Public Security of Malaysia (IPSOM) under the Home Ministry and the Sabah Strategic & Security Research Centre (SASSREC), UMS.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Zahid said based on the current threat, security operations on land, at sea and in the air were no longer confined to the coastal areas of east Sabah but also extended to the coastal areas in the western part.

Thus, he wanted a comprehensive defence or 'handruh' involving co-operation between all strata of society and members of the security forces to be given a new life and continuity to ensure not an inch of the country's territory, especially in Sabah, be encroached by anyone.

"Although the presence of the police and military as well as punitive and preventive laws are important, it is the resilience of the people that is more important than the existing law and presence of the security forces because actual defence is the overall defence or 'handruh'.

"An understanding (on the overall defence) can assist the physical defence... in fact we can assist the existing security forces," he said.

Ahmad Zahid stressed that the responsibility of defending the country's security and sovereignty was the responsibility of everyone regardless



Ahmad Zahid (front row fourth right), flanked by Musa (front row third right), Alwi (front row second left), Dr Harun (front row third left) and others after the event. Also in the photo are Sukarti, Noor Rashid and Abdul Rashid.

of their origin.

The Deputy Prime Minister also reassured that the Federal government would defend the sovereignty of Sabah and would not allow anyone to encroach even an inch into the country's soil.

He said Sabah was a sovereign state in Malaysia and there was no question of anyone making any claim on the State because the people of Sabah, through a poll carried out in the 1960's, had made a decision to be together in the formation of Malaysia.

As such, Ahmad Zahid said the existence of various acts and legislations which were punitive and preventive in the country aimed to ensure that the national sovereignty enjoyed currently continued to be preserved.