

Zahid wants swift justice for abuse cases at tahfiz institutions



PETALING JAYA: Strict legal action should be taken immediately against anyone involved in violent acts against students in tahfiz institutions, says Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi (pic).

The Deputy Prime Minister said he felt a deep sense of regret over cases that went viral, including a case in Sabah in which a video of a tahfiz student being physically assaulted circulated online.

"The government stresses that

any form of violence, abuse or actions that outrage the modesty of children can never be accepted.

"This is especially if it happens in an institution that is meant to build values, love and character among young people," he said in a statement yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid was commenting on a recent incident in Telipok, Sabah where a teacher at a private tahfiz centre had allegedly assaulted students with a helmet

outside a cyber cafe.

It was reported that the teacher was suspended by the centre's management board.

Ahmad Zahid hoped that strict and immediate legal action would be taken against anyone found guilty under the law to ensure that such incidents do not recur.

"This isolated incident does not represent the overall national tahfiz education ecosystem.

"To strengthen protection for

students and the overall administration of tahfiz institutions, the government is working towards the implementation of the National Tahfiz Education Policy 2.0, which is scheduled to be launched next year," he said.

The policy will focus on the enforcement of rules and regulations, improving the curriculum and National Tahfiz Education model, as well as strengthening human capital, among others.

Embracing rooftop power

Solar Atap programme supports renewable energy agenda

PUTRAJAYA: The Solar Accelerated Transition Action Programme (Solar Atap) will be implemented from Jan 1 to harness the potential of rooftops for electricity generation using solar photovoltaic (PV) technology.

In a statement yesterday, the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry (Petra) confirmed that the programme aligns with its earlier announcement on Sept 12, and is the successor to the Nett Energy Metering (NEM) scheme that ended on June 30.

"As the regulator of the electricity supply industry, the Energy Commission has prepared the Solar Atap guidelines, accessible on its website from Dec 31.

"Applications can be submitted starting Jan 1, 2026, via the Sustainable Energy Development Authority's website," said the ministry.

Petra added that the final programme incorporates several improvements based on stakeholder feedback.

Notably, Solar Atap will not have a fixed quota at launch, though the government retains the right to impose a cap should unbridled integration of solar PV into the national supply grid threaten to destabilise the grid.

The risk of destabilising the grid comes from the inherent intermittency of solar PV output due to passing clouds or rain, leading to voltage or frequency fluctuations, especially during periods of high PV production against a backdrop of either very high or very low demand.

Furthermore, the programme retains a core principle of NEM by



Power of the sun: The programme is expected to provide a viable choice for consumers to use rooftops for renewable energy. — The Star/ NG KOK LEONG

allowing surplus solar energy to be fed into the grid for energy credit, with specific adjustments to make it more attractive than the existing Solar for Self-Consumption (SelCo) scheme.

In its statement, Petra said it has set the energy credit rates based on electricity market prices, with non-domestic consumers receiving the system marginal price, and domestic consumers receiving their prevailing energy charge.

"The solar system installation limit is set at 100% of maximum demand, allowing consumers to fully optimise their solar installa-

tion for self-use. For domestic users, homes with single-phase supply are permitted to install systems with a capacity of up to 5kW, while the capacity for three-phase homes has been raised from 12.5kW to 15kW," the statement read.

The Solar Atap programme is expected to provide a viable choice for consumers to use building rooftops for renewable energy, while also significantly accelerating support for national carbon reduction goals.

Petra is also confident the move will serve as a long-term catalyst for strengthening the national

energy landscape and supporting aspiration to achieve 70% renewable energy capacity by 2050.

Petra also announced the appointment of Datuk Seri Asri Hamidin as chair of the Energy Commission for one year effective Jan 1.

Asri, 59, is a Masters of Economics graduate from Japan's Hiroshima University, other than holding a Masters of Economics from Universiti Malaya.

He has served in the public service for 31 years, starting as assistant director of the Economic Planning Unit under the Prime Minister's Department.

Four agencies can't be used to pay PBAPP going forward

GEORGE TOWN: Penang's water consumers will no longer be able to pay their bills at Pos Malaysia, Paylink, MobilityOne and MBF, following the Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) refusal to continue absorbing commission charges levied by these collection agencies.

According to PBAPP CEO Datuk K. Pathmanathan, the corporation ended up forking out commissions ranging from 40 sen to 90 sen for each transaction that goes through these collection agents.

In a statement yesterday, he said the development stems from a directive by the National Water Services Commission (SPAN), which forbids PBAPP from passing on commission charges to end users.

"PBAPP has collaborated with these bill collection agencies for years, and last year, four of these agencies collected commissions for a total of 836,444 Penang water bill transactions, which represents 27% of the total recorded water bill payment transactions."

Pathmanathan said SPAN had announced in February that Penang water consumers could not be made to pay the commission, with several PBAPP appeals on the matter rejected by SPAN.

However, he said Penang water users still have options, such as myPBA mobile app, myPBA portal, JomPay Bill Code: 50385, Maybank2U and Easy Pay.

Alternatively, they can visit any of the nine PBAPP customer service centres.

Melaka council gets RM2mil for draft development plan

MELAKA: A total of RM2mil has been allocated to the Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council (MPHTJ) to prepare its draft local plan aimed at ensuring the town's development is guided in a more sustainable, liveable and competitive manner up to 2035.

State housing, local government, drainage, climate change and disaster management committee chairman Datuk Rais Yasin said the allocation was provided by the Housing and Local Government Ministry through the Town and Country Planning

Department (PLANMalaysia) under the Fifth Rolling Plan of the 12th Malaysia Plan.

He said the strategic planning document will serve as the main reference for MPHTJ's development over the next 10 to 15 years, promoting organised, balanced and people-centred urban growth.

"The last draft local plan for MPHTJ was prepared 20 years ago, making this review crucial as it will replace the existing plan.

"It takes into account changes in the development landscape,

population growth, infrastructure needs, environmental concerns and local economic potential, to ensure that future development decisions are more effective," he told Bernama after launching a publicity and public participation programme to invite residents to submit proposals or objections to the draft MPHTJ Local Plan 2035 (Replacement).

Rais said the plan is open for public feedback until Dec 31.

The plan outlines six development thrusts, 33 strategies, 77 subject areas and 281 compo-

nents covering natural resources, the local economy, urban liveability, and the availability of facilities and amenities, to ensure balanced and sustainable development.

"More importantly, the draft also identifies 42 'quick-win' projects that can be implemented in the short term to deliver immediate benefits to residents."

In a separate development, Rais said the state government is planning to elevate MPHTJ to city status, although several conditions must first be met at the federal level, including a minimum popu-

lation requirement of 500,000 residents within the local authority's administrative area.

However, he noted that MPHTJ currently has an estimated population of about 200,000, out of Melaka's total population of 1.05 million.

"Although MPHTJ has yet to meet the population requirement, its revenue collection is the second highest in the state after the Melaka Historic City Council. As such, we will request the Federal Government to consider relaxing the existing condition."