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Close watch on nightspots should be welcomed

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THE Seremban Municipal Council's decision to review licensing conditions for entertainment centres to make operators adopt "positive changes" should be welcomed by the people.

The review is aimed at checking negative culture brought about by these establishments on the public, especially youths.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had recently directed the Menteri Besar and Chief Ministers to keep a close check on these outlets which had been identified as the root of all social problems.

With the Federal Government expressing its deep concern on the social ills caused by these places, the council's move in directing entertainment centre operators to make changes should be commended.

Critics may even call for these outlets to be banned to solve the problem effectively.

Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad, who is also council president, however, said the State had no plans to close down these centres as it would not solve social problems in the State.

Speaking after chairing the council's full board meeting recently, he said entertainment outlets like karaoke centres would be required to replace existing doors with see-through doors for patrons.

Besides, he said, these outlets would also not be allowed to fix tinted glass in karaoke rooms.

"When the doors are closed, we don't really know what they, especially unmarried couples, are doing inside the room," he said, adding that outlets which failed to comply with the directive would be shut down.

He had also directed other local Government authorities in the State to intensify enforcement on such premises.

Mohamad Isa had also urged councillors of local authorities to conduct regular checks together with enforcement personnel to check immoral activities at entertainment outlets.

In this respect, affected operators should be sincere in their effort to prevent their centres from being identified as the root of all social problems.

They should co-operate by preventing unhealthy activities from taking place at their establishments.

In the final analysis, operators should show their concern and commitment to enable them to act responsibly to minimise the social ills associated with their operations.

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