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`Tolerance the mark of Islam in Malaysia'

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - The Malaysian-European Union Joint Seminar: Europe and the Islamic World would enable more people in Europe to know that tolerance was the hallmark of Islam in Malaysia.

Spanish ambassador to Malaysia, Carles Casajuana said it was important to send the message that Malaysia, as an Islamic country, practised openness to other cultures.

The two-day seminar, organised by the Malaysian Institute of Islamic Understanding and the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies is scheduled to be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 24.

Spain was appointed one of the European Union consultants to organise the seminar with Ikim and the Oxford centre.

The other consultants are from Britain and Italy. New Straits Times is the official newspaper.

Casajuana said when Islam was in Spain nearly 800 years ago, it was at the height of its glory and Spain was still considered by many Muslim countries as a "brother" nation.

Today, traces of that heritage could be seen in Cordova, Andalusia and Granada where Muslims had settled. Spain was the scene of an ideological confrontation between Islam and Christianity.

Both Spain and Malaysia had something in common as both nations had been at the crossroads of international maritime trade.

However, Casajuana added, there was something different about Malaysia. Though it was a multi-religious country, there had not been any confrontation of ideologies.

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