

**Ministry studying policy to enhance culture**  
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The Information Communication and Culture Ministry plans to draw up a policy that will enhance or commercialise the country's arts and culture.

Its minister, Rais Yatim said the policy, to be presented to the cabinet for approval, would highlight the various aspects of the industry.

"We are studying the creative industry more closely and the ministry, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the Ministry of Education, will look closely at how we have to develop the creative industry to meet the commercial needs and requirement of our own arts and culture.

"The aspects that we are studying are, firstly the type of guidance that we should give; secondly, the incentives that must be studied more closely; and thirdly, the level of our culture that can be reflected through the involvement of the arts industry itself," he told reporters after launching the 'Laman Santai' programme and the 'Iqwal 1Malaysia' album in Kuala Lumpur last night.

Earlier in his speech, Rais said the government was always making efforts to assist the local music industry by providing various incentives including funds to boost the growth of the industry.

"Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak himself, when tabling the 2010 budget, was concerned with the development of the industry and had allocated RM200 million which will also be used to enhance the local music industry so as to become more competitive," he said.

He said the ministry was also formulating a more comprehensive policy for the National Creativity Industry so that the industry would have a proper road map to safeguard the interest of cultural activists.

The Iqwal 1Malaysia album is the first of its kind in Malaysia featuring six songs in six languages, namely Bahasa Melayu, English, Mandarin, Iban, Kadazan and Tamil, rendered by Ikhwal Hafiz Ismail who has been singing since the age of four and who started writing lyrics for songs at the age of 12.

The album has also been recognised by the Malaysia Book Of Records as the "First Artist To Record 1Malaysia Songs Album In Six Languages".

Rais said his ministry, through 'Tabung Penggiat Seni' had contributed RM50,000 to cover the cost of producing the album as well as for the release of an English album in the United States.

- *Bernama*

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