

Attire Policing For European Visitors Discourages Tourism
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It is bad enough that Kelantan remains the poorest state in Malaysia in view that the PAS-led administration's policies have failed to generate much needed foreign direct investment to revive the east coast state's economy, worse still is that the hardline state government is relentless in its pursuit of attire policy, with foreign tourists being the latest target.

Berita Harian(6 Mar 2012) reported that Menteri Besar Nik Aziz wants the state's Tourism Information Center to pay attention to ensure that foreign tourists in particular those from Europe are attired in abidance with the dress codes of local authorities and in accordance with Islamic regulations.

As a Kelantan native, I cannot help but connect the latest recommendation (read "directive") by the PAS spiritual leader as a continuation of the attire prohibitions list already permeating and irritatingly restricting the local Kelantanese population besides foreign tourists and investors on personal freedoms with regards to attire, for example:

- 1) June 2008: Kota Bharu Municipal Council directive to women not to apply lipstick or wear high heels as they could lead to immoral activities
- 2) June 2009: Tengku Anis Municipal Council signage at public park urge non-Muslim women park goers to cover up i.e. wear tops which are long enough to cover the waist, with sleeves and knee length trousers
- 3) January 2010: the Kota Bharu Municipal Council fined 10 Muslim female employees for donning short sleeves while working in Chinese shops
- 4) 21 June 2010: PAS Chetok assemblyman proposed holding a campaign to only dine at shops where the food attendants cover their aurat; thereby discriminating against outlets whose employee's uniform comprise of polo t-shirts
- 5) 6 March 2011: Hair salon owner issued a summons for allowing employee to wear a three-quarter-sleeved blouse while on duty

MCA Kelantan holds that so long as the tourists and investors be they foreign or domestic, are decently clad, and not dressing immodestly, there should not be any more attire policing. Such attempts only rebuff visitors to our east coast state. The local authorities should focus on hygiene and cleanliness of a premises rather than judging and being punitive on the clothes people wear.

Snoop squads free of voyeurism & lustful thoughts?

When tourists come to Kelantan, besides desiring to be immersed in the rich and time-held cultures of native Kelantanese, they also want to enjoy our pristine beaches whose tourism potential has yet to be fully maximised. They may also want to experience the simplicity of kampong life via homestay.

To station moral enforcement officers ala snoop squads to be on the lookout for tourists who are properly or indecently attired at the beach or in townships or in the kampongs where they want to experience homestay, is none other than to encourage voyeurism.

What assurances do tourists and beachgoers have that the snoop squads are not scanning the silhouette of tourists with prurient thoughts running through their mind?

Tourists, beachgoers and homestayors want to enjoy our seaside, marine and coral life leisurely yet with

privacy, without having to be conscious all the time that their walk along the shores, snorkel on the waters' surface, dive underwater, or stroll around the kampong is being observed and monitored constantly by the authorities on patrol out to nab them or any form of bodily harm may befall them.

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