

Narrow views affecting unity

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They're alienating Malays from non-Malays

NARROW viewpoints affect unity, confuse the public and bring about the perception that Malays are not fair, Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (Ikim) director-general Dr Syed Ali Tawfik al-Attas told *Berita Minggu*.

Dr Syed Ali said the action of certain Muslims who make narrow-minded statements or enforce rules that were not taught by religion was disturbing race relations in the country.

He said issues like not being allowed to wish Selamat Deepavali to Hindus and the ban on bringing in non-halal food to school were causing the Malays to be alienated from non-Muslims.

"What is the problem with a non-Muslim bringing in food that contains pork? The food is specifically for them.

"If this attitude persists, later someone will say that Muslims cannot live next to non-Muslims or that Muslims cannot socialise with non-Muslims."

Dr Syed Ali added that there

were so many instances these days of things that were considered *haram* or *halal*. However, he was confident that a majority of Malays were rational in their relations with other races and did not accept ignorant statements as the truth.

> *Kosmo!* reported that local governments seemed to be unenthusiastic about the com-

ing Visit Malaysia Year 2007 owing to the fact that many tourist spots still remained littered with rubbish.

The report said both Pantai Sepat and Teluk Chempedak in Kuantan were having a "rubbish problem" and that the local government ought to be aware of keeping the environment clean.

According to a Kuantan Municipal Council spokesperson, the council only focused on specific tourist activities which would take place next year, and that cleaning and infrastructure exercises would be carried out according to the funds available.

> *Mingguan Malaysia* reported that the Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) in Johor has managed to attract foreign direct investments (FDIs) amounting to some RM2bil since it was declared a free trade zone in 2002.

PTP chief executive officer Harun Johari said the effect of the port's development had created about 25,000 jobs up to next year.