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Malacca High School to stay put

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FACELIFT: School is part of Unesco World Heritage Site, says Idris

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Datuk Seri Idris Haron says the state will upgrade the area

THE oldest school in the state, Malacca High School, will not be relocated as it is part of Malacca's heritage, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron. He said the school would be given a facelift.

When Malacca was listed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) World Heritage Site on July 7, 2008, the school was included as part of the state's heritage.

"As the school is located in the buffer zone of the Unesco World Heritage Site, there are no plans to develop the area, but only to upgrade and maintain it."

Idris said the proposed relocation was made a long time ago, prior to it being recognised as a World Heritage Site.

"Under my administration, we have no plans to develop the area, other than to upgrade all buildings in the heritage zone."

He said this at the Hari Raya open house of Umno executive secretary, Datuk Ab Rauf Yusoh, in Kampung Pulau in Alor Gajah here yesterday.

Yesterday, the *New Straits Times* reported that state Education, Higher Education, Sci-

ence, Technology, Green Technology and Innovations Committee chairman Datuk Md Yunus Husin had said there was a need to relocate Malacca High School to ease traffic congestion in the state. He said the state government was identifying alternative sites.

Various parties, especially students and teachers, had objected to the proposal, based on a letter dated June 30 from the Education Ministry's Planning and Policy Research Division.

This is the second time in 20 years that the state government had proposed the relocation of the country's second oldest school.

The school, established in 1826, was known as Malacca Free School and changed to its present name in 1878.

The first attempt, in 1993, to move the school out of Bandar Hillir, together with two schools — St Francis Institution and the Sacred Heart Convent — failed after meeting strong opposition from students and the schools' alumni.