

**Rais Calls For Continuous Effort To Promote Malaysia-Indonesia Ties**  
**Bernama**  
**January 20, 2012**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 20 (Bernama) -- Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim has called for a continuous effort to promote the Malaysia-Indonesia ties, including at the people-to-people and cultural levels.

He said among the efforts was the exchange of student in various arts and cultural fields to promote cultural understanding and open up potentials for collaboration among arts and cultural activists.

"We will provide funds to encourage these cultural-related activities," he told reporters after meeting cultural intellectuals from both countries Friday.

Present were Universitas Indonesia's dean of cultural studies Bambang Wibawarta, Rector of Arts Culture and Heritage Academy Malaysia Prof Dr Mohamad Hatta Azad Khan and the Indonesian head for the Association of Malaysian and Indonesian Journalists (Iswami), Saiful Hadi.

They came to meet Rais to invite him to deliver an address for academicians, media practitioners and students of Universitas Indonesia, in Jakarta next month.

While there, Rais is scheduled to hand over books on Malaysia to the university.

Meanwhile, Bambang hoped that good cooperation and an increase in awareness on both countries' common cultural roots would prevent misunderstanding among the people.

"If we can clearly map out our cultural roots, then we will be able to understand each other better and there will be no accusations of one taking the culture of the other," he said.

He agreed with Rais that cultural understanding would promote goodwill among the peoples of both countries, and could pave the way for the creation of literary masterpiece.

"The move to enhance cultural cooperation, therefore, is a very good effort," he said, adding that cultural suspicions should not arise and that the energy spent on debating it could be best channelled to promote the creative industry.

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