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## Clerics urged to remove stigma from AIDS patients

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom has urged Muslim clerics to play a bigger role in removing the stigma from AIDS patients. He said as an influential group, the clerics should join others in helping society to control and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

"AIDS patients are deemed bad from the moral and social aspect. As such, explanation, understanding and religious approach can remove the stigma and discrimination," he said after launching the book 'Manual Islam dan HIV/AIDS' at Pusat Islam here Thursday.

Jamil proposed that religious programmes at mosques focus on improving public perception towards AIDS patients.

"Removal of the stigma will encourage more AIDS patients to sign up. There are 87,710 registered HIV/AIDS patients," he said.