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Muslim 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 yesterday.

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

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

The book is published by Islamic Development Department Malaysia (Jakim) with co-operation of the Health Ministry, National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK) and AIDS Council Malaysia. - Bernama