

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **SMOKE-FREE ZONES IN MELAKA**

Come 15 June 2011, five areas covering a total of 338 hectares in Melaka will become smoke-free zones, making it the first state in the country to gazette specific areas where smoking is banned.

The areas comprise the entire 4.2 square kilometres of the World Heritage City of Melaka, Melaka Raya (commercial centre), Melaka International Trade Centre (MITC) at Ayer Keroh and the Alor Gajah and Jasin town centres.

The Malaysian Health Minister, Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai had made the announcement at a World Tobacco Free Day celebration in Melaka recently.

According to the Minister, the smoking ban at various public areas in Melaka including tourist destinations was enforced in order to preserve and protect its historical monuments and buildings; to protect the public especially women and children from the dangers of cigarette smoke; and to keep the city's environment clean and healthy.

"Those caught smoking at the designated smoke-free areas could face fines starting at RM300 although the maximum compound is RM5,000," he said.

Currently, the Ministry of Health has identified 21 types of areas nationwide where smoking is prohibited. These include government premises, hospitals, shopping complexes, stadiums, in public transportation, educational institutions and airports.

The State of Melaka plans to declare more tourist destinations in the state smoke-free zones in the future. The Ministry of Health is also looking

at designating more “no smoking” zones throughout Malaysia especially at tourist attractions.

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