

# Standard halal cert, symbol to beat fakes

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A standard halal certificate and symbol will be introduced soon, replacing the various certificates being issued by different states, bodies and companies.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Maj-Gen (R) Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said yesterday the standardised system would be put in place after the Halal Act was passed by Parliament.

He said it was hoped the act, now being drafted, would be completed in time to be tabled at the second parliamentary meeting, scheduled to begin in mid-June.



Maj-Gen (R) Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom says a Halal Act is being drafted as well

The reason for the act was to ensure that halal certification was not abused, he said, adding that the Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) was issuing a standard certificate for people's convenience.

"With many different certificates and halal symbols, people can't identify what is genuine and what isn't. Once we have a standard certificate, if they see a different symbol, then they'll know it's not the real one issued by Jakim."

Jamil, who was speaking after the launch of the 1Malaysia 1Halal campaign in Masjid

Negara, said the Halal Act would address the issue of enforcement.

"Enforcement is important. Currently, if people commit offences, for example, by saying something that is not halal is halal, we can *tegur* (scold). But it doesn't have a big effect."

Jamil said Jakim was discussing with the Attorney-General's Chambers to see what kind of enforcement measures the act could include.

During the launch, he said the country hoped to become a global hub for halal products.

"What began as a religious

requirement slanted towards ritual obligations has now emerged as a segment of the economy which has a RM8 trillion potential in the global market."

HighBeam Research in 2007 concluded that the global halal food market supplying the needs of 1.8 billion Muslims in 112 countries would be worth US\$500 billion (RM1.75 trillion) this year.

Jakim's 1Malaysia 1Halal campaign comprises 13 awareness-raising activities, including the *Halalan Toyyiban* (Halal and High Quality) seminar.