

# Call for Waterfront to be more disabled friendly

**KUCHING:** Many tourists may give the Kuching Waterfront a favourable rating but a study has called for more features to be enhanced for people with special needs.

The study, conducted in 2008, pointed out that bollards and curb cuts built along the Waterfront made it difficult for the disadvantaged especially those in wheelchairs to move around.

It was also raised that no accessible parking had been provided for people with special needs.

In addition, the public toilets at Kuching Waterfront were built in such a way that they are unfriendly to the disadvantaged.

Sharing this with reporters here yesterday was International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) deputy dean of Postgraduate, Research and Consultancy Prof Dr Asiah Abdul Rahim, who said the study team, however, had noted some and looked forward to further



Prof Dr Asiah Abdul Rahim

improvement.

"The bollards and curb cuts seen at the Kuching Waterfront are not comfortable for the wheelchair bound. Moreover, the side parking there offers no convenience for the disadvantaged.

"There is no accessible parking and the traffic light there is not

friendly to the disabled. It should allow more time for those in wheelchairs to cross the road," she said when met at a workshop titled 'Access audit for built environment' at the Sarawak Tourism Complex here.

Asiah added at least 60 seconds should be granted for pedestrians at the traffic light, pointing the current 15 to 20 seconds crossing time as inconsiderate.

On the public toilets at Kuching Waterfront, she said accessibility for wheelchair users was not noted.

"Kuching Waterfront was one of the 16 cases we studied in 2008. Some structures are old, built in the 70s and 80s but we are trying to provide input to see that they are more disabled friendly."

The two-day workshop is jointly organised by Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED) of IIUM, Malaysia Standards Department and Kuching City North Commission (DBKU).

## Abit best Barisan candidate to defend Ulu Rajang – Pemanca

**SIBU:** Incumbent Datuk Billy Abit Joo is the best possible candidate to defend the Hulu Rajang seat for the Barisan Nasional in the coming general election, says Pemanca Tony Kulleh.

He said that a few individuals were already moving around in the Orang Ulu-majority seat, each claiming to be the best candidate to represent BN.

"But I believe Abit is the best because he has done much to serve the people. I also believe that he will continue to do so if he is re-nominated and win again."

He thus urged the people, particularly those from the

Kenyah community, to support the incumbent.

Kulleh said that Abit was close with the people at the federal level and had been successful in getting development projects for Hulu Rajang, especially Belaga.

He said this at the commissioning of a new bridge near Uma Badeng (longhouse) at Sungai Asap Resettlement Scheme in Belaga District yesterday. Abit officiated at the function.

The bridge replaces the old bridge which was swept away by a flood about a year ago.

In his speech, Abit urged the

people not to think negatively of the government, but to support and work with it to ensure more developments would come their way.

"The government is working very hard to make sure people, especially those in the rural areas, have a better standard of living," he said.

He also asked the people in Asap Koyan to continue supporting the BN in the coming election.

At the function, he announced a government grant of RM30,000 for Uma Badeng's Village Security and Development Committee (JKKK).