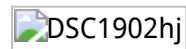


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## CHAMPIONING AND PRESERVING ORAL TRADITIONS HERITAGE FOR NATION'S FUTURE GENERATIONS

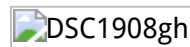


USM, PENANG, July 2016 – The current wave of modernisation which is focusing more on new media has resulted in many oral traditions once championed, now being forgotten and overwhelmed by the wave of globalisation.

That was stated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Development Affairs and Alumni), Professor Dato' Dr. Adnan Hussein in representing the USM Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman at the Opening Ceremony and Dinner in conjunction with the Seminar on Regional Oral Traditions held here recently.

He explained that, this seminar would provide the avenue in the sharing of knowledge, ideas, expertise and experiences which may not be found in books.

"Traditions which were once valued and treasured by society in the past, and going even beyond the region may face extinction unless they are preserved and well-documented," he added.



He further said that, researchers on oral traditions need to continue being active in their research which should not just be within the traditional context, but also in terms of its relevance and functionalities in contemporary times, as oral traditions could transcend time and be presented in various forms of new media.

According to the Advisor of the Seminar on Regional Oral Traditions, Professor Dato' Seri Dr. Md Salleh Yaapar, the scope of oral traditions is widespread and far-reaching throughout the region, varied and different according to the respective stories and traditions of various countries.

"Oral traditions transcend temporal and national boundaries, still in existence up till now and is undergoing periodic transformation and requiring preservation, so that the heritage will not be lost in time," he said.

He added that, oral traditions which relate to narrated stories, storytellers or minstrels, traditional shows, poets and others of similar nature need to remain being the pride of society in this region.

Salleh also hoped that the seminar could explore and discuss matters relating to oral traditions comprehensively, for the practice to be spread throughout the nation.

Meanwhile, Chairperson of the Seminar on Regional Oral Traditions, Professor Dr. Jelani Harun emphasised that the seminar provided a platform to revitalise the art on oral traditions and its significance in the region, while looking at those which are still in practice and others which have vanished.

"It is the nation's heritage, which needs preservation for future generations to appreciate this tradition, while the current younger generation having the interest also needs to be nurtured," he said when interviewed.

The highlights of the ceremony were presentations by the 'Awang Batil' ('story-teller' accompanied by a small drum and flute) from the state of Perlis and 'seloka' (morality poems) and 'gurindam' (Malay poem with irregular verses) by Roslan Madun.

Also present at the ceremony were the National Council of Professors' Head of History, Heritage and Socio-cultural Cluster, Professor Dato' Dr. Teo Kok Seong; Director of Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) Northern Region, Abdul Nasir Mohd Razali and Dean, USM School of Humanities Professor Dr. Narimah Samat.

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