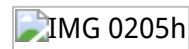


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MONUMENTS OF HISTORICAL VALUES FOUND AT SUNGAI BATU ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX PROVES EXISTENCE OF EARLY CIVILISATIONS



SUNGAI PETANI, 22 May 2016 - A study focuses on the remains found at the Sungai Batu Archaeological Complex which could have been used for religious purposes, as well as monuments that would indicate the possible sites of jetties, administrative quarters and iron smelting activities were carried out by a team from the Centre for Global Archaeological Research (CGAR), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) headed by its Director, Professor Dato' Dr. Mokhtar Saidin.

According to one of the team member, Ratnah Wati Mohd Rapi, attempts were made to establish the connections between the monuments in terms of their dating, architecture and building materials.

"This research also attempts to answer some questions regarding the technology being employed and insights into the way the early people live their lives at that time," she said.

Ratnah added that monuments can be defined as structures, statues, and so forth that were built to commemorate a person or an important event and it has an important value to a social group as part of its remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage. Monuments also serve as a medium of interaction between the living and the dead through the heritage that is handed down through generations.

"The architecture of the monuments sometimes represent the power, authority, technology and the progress of a civilisation, as monuments are a part of the urban development that characterised the civilisation besides the administration system, social classes, religion and beliefs, and form of communication such as the writing system," she elaborated.

Citing the objectives of this research, Ratnah said that it is to identify the function of the monuments, to determine the date of each monument and to identify the architectural attributes of the monuments.

She concluded that radiocarbon dating technology showed that human activities began in the complex as early as the 5th century B.C. and the buildings found there probably had several functions, among them being jetties, administration quarters and ritualistic sites.

The methodology used for this research consists of excavation, structural analysis, Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating and Radiocarbon dating.

Ratnah is among the participants of the Kedah Tua International Conference (KTIC) held at Park Avenue Hotel, Sungai Petani from 21 to 22 May 2016 which gathers the world's renowned scholars and archaeologists to visit and discuss the importance of the Sungai Batu archaeological site in Kedah that many believed is on par with those of other great ancient civilisations.

Besides highlighting the Kedah Tua civilisation and its significance in South-East Asia, it will discuss current developments in global archaeology.

Held by the USM CGAR, it is jointly organised with, among others, the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority (NCIA), the National Heritage Department, the Tourism and Culture Ministry, the Kedah government and the Malaysian Inbound Tourism Association.

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