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A VALUABLE EXCHANGE OF CULTURES: JAPANESE MUSICIAN PROF. ANTONIO KOGA PERFORMS IN MALAYSIA

USM, PENANG, 22 March 2016 - A mesmerizing gesture of cultural exchange between Japan and Malaysia was presented in the form of stage performances with the theme "Reminiscing the Past, Celebrating the Future" at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM).

Professor Antonio Koga, a professional and renowned classical guitarist as well as a singer from Japan held a 45-minute solo performance on the stage. Despite his first time performing in Penang, Malaysia, his extensive experience as a performer had evoked different emotions from those in the audience.

Impressed by a musician who played the guitar wonderfully in a concert, Koga started playing guitar since he was 8, and later on he started to sing at the age of 18.

"Practice playing the instruments at least from one or two minutes, up to three hours each day; to learn and play effectively, love the guitar and treat it like a friend," said Koga when giving advice to the younger generation having a strong interest in music.

Koga added his thoughts regarding cultural exchange, "learn the Japanese language and the culture, respect each other although we are initially of different countries, cultures and races."

Meanwhile, to showcase the beauty of the Malaysian culture, other special performances including the Malaysian traditional performances such as 'Wayang Kulit', 'Silat demonstration', 'Mak Yong dance' and 'Gamelan' performed by the staff from Dewan Budaya, USM School of the Arts, Student Development Affairs and Alumni Department as well as ADIKARMA group offered the Japanese audience an introduction to the richness of Malaysian culture, with moves truly graceful and elegant.

The mini concert was held at the Palinggam Cahaya, USM School of the Arts as part of the launching of the KUFUS-USM Japanese Cultural Centre here earlier in the morning.

The concert was also attended by the Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Directors, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies (KUFUS) Professor Dr. Yoshikazu Morita; USM Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman; USM Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Community Network) Professor Dato' Dr. See Ching Mey, and a host of invited guests from Japan, USM staff and students.

“We hope that this collaboration would strengthen the cultural exchange between Malaysia and Japan by spreading the charms of the cultures, languages, arts and religious beliefs to each other,” said Omar.

He added further, “Malaysia should be promoted not merely as a place for knowledge enrichment, but also having the uniqueness as a tourist destination with numerous attractions.”

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