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## HAVING A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES MAKES THE MUSEUM MORE ATTRACTIVE TO VISITORS



PENANG, April 2015 - Mention the word 'museum' and what comes to mind would be a place where various artifacts and historical items are kept. By looking at the museum visits, they would be synonymous mostly with classroom trips by primary and secondary school students.

According to the Deputy Director of Cologne Museum in Koln, Germany, Karin Rottman, having an assortment of unique activities would turn a museum into an attraction to the visitors. Not only for school trips but also for the younger generations, who would choose to visit a museum during their free time.

"To attract the younger generation, a museum should conduct a variety of educational activities and not only holding exhibitions or displaying historical items in a static state. With a myriad of activities that appeal to the younger generation, a museum could even become a new tourist attraction," she said.



Karin added, the number of local visitors can be increased if the museum authorities can have new and contemporary approaches such as by displaying the artifacts and combining them with the latest technological aids such as video shows, together with movements and sounds.

"This is the approach taken by the Cologne Museum in Koln, Germany where the visitors are not only international tourists, but also the locals who come for information and participating in other activities such as reading, taking part in quizzes, purchase of artifacts and listening to talks given by historians," she said at the workshop session "Bringing Museums To Life", organised by Muzium dan Galeri Tuanku Fauziah Universiti Sains Malaysia (MGTF USM) with the cooperation of Goethe-Institut Malaysia, held here recently.



Having a vast experience in museum education, Karin too is involved with Goethe-Institut Malaysia to plan a comprehensive training programme on museum education in six countries in South America.

Meanwhile, the Director of MGFT USM, Zolkurnian Hassan is also aware that the young generation is less interested to spend time at the museum.

"The challenge for museum authorities currently is that, the young generation would prefer to spend their time more at the shopping centres compared to making trips to the museum, unless if the trip is organised by the school," said Zolkurnian.



Such a workshop could provide the needed input to the museum curators to assist in expanding and promoting their ideas to the locals and the international tourists, especially the younger generation.

"At MGTF USM, we have held various educational programmes which could attract students to come to the museum, for example, having lecturers from the School of the Arts to conduct lessons at the museum, which indirectly would provide the exposure to the students on MGTF and promoting it to those outside USM," said Zolkurnian.

The one-day workshop gathered curators and those directly involved with museums and galleries. - Translation: Mazlan Hanafi Basharudin/Text: Syuhada Abd Aziz/Photos: Zamani Abdul Rahim



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