

CommUnity

Communicating Unity

MAY 2022



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JUST 30 SECONDS

16th May 2022 marked a very significant day in the history of YPS and our teachers. YPS turned 28 and our teachers celebrated Teachers' Day nationwide.

I am happy for both.

It has been quite a journey for YPS. Of course, there are ups and downs, achievements and challenges. But what is most important is the fact that we play our part in contributing towards this beloved state of ours, in making sure that our precious gift of unity and harmonious relations are maintained and strengthened.

For this issue, we decided to dedicate the cover to our team, the flag bearers of YPS. We also talked to some people who were initially involved with the inception of YPS such as the first Secretary to the Board of Trustees. They were, and still are, a significant part of this organisation, laying the foundation for what it is now.

I have high hopes for YPS and I believe together we could make this happen, for the betterment of our people.

Happy reading and stay safe.

Thank you.

Datu Aloysius J. Dris
Chief Executive
Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak

News Flash

Happy Teachers Day, Cikgu!

By THE STAR SAYS



DOCTORS, lawyers, engineers and pretty much any professional you can think of, all have one thing in common: Good, dedicated teachers who inspired and nurtured them to pursue their dreams.

Teaching is more than a job; it is a calling. Teachers are role models to hundreds of thousands of impressionable minds, yet they have for years been increasingly distracted from their classroom duties.

According to the National Union of the Teaching Profession, 10,000 teachers apply for early retirement annually. And there has been an increase in applications over the last two years.

The reasons, many teachers told Sunday Star, include personal, medical and workplace issues; burnout; too much paperwork and non-teaching duties; having to handle oversized classrooms and activities that require a lot of preparation; being posted away from their families; and feeling unappreciated (see StarEdu for the full story).

www.thestar.com.my

YPS organises community market to celebrate 28th anniversary, free art workshops available to public

May 21, 2022 @ 13:03



Chan (centre), Aloysius (left) and Wan Ali touring the YPS community market exhibition.

dayakdaily.com

Inspirations

Datu Aloysius J. Dris

Chief Executive, Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak



One of our objectives is working with like-minded organisations and this becomes our strengths. Organisations big or small, are ready to work with us in terms of contributing ideas, time and effort. This is a good sign since we understand each other, we interact with each other, appreciating each other's way of life. This is a very Sarawak way of interacting. We are very thankful indeed to all these organisations and we hope it will continue that way.

Christopher Chua

One of the first few people working with the founding fathers (early 90s, before and during the inception of YPS)

I believe YPS provides the necessary platform to promote unity in Sarawak. The founding fathers, both Tun Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud and Tan Sri Datuk Seri Mohd Effendi bin Norwawi indeed have the foresight to address the issue of unity from very early on.

Unity among people within a nation is very important, because a nation will never grow if there is disunity. The nation becomes stagnant. Therefore, it is important to ensure that our young people understand the value of unity. If they grew up without these values, they might have different thinking that may not lead to unity. Unity does not come when you are 60 years old, so we need to inculcate these values from young. It is not about mimicking other cultures but understanding the values of other cultures and looking at cultures in a positive sense, that is unity. For me, unity comes with culture.



YPS - bearing the flag of unity



1990s INITIAL DISCUSSION

The founding fathers had a discussion with a group of passionate Sarawakians for the formation of YPS.

1994 – 2004 THE INCEPTION

Laying the foundation for YPS – setting of goals and direction, finding the right people, networking and leveraging with other organisations, identifying potential partners, securing funds and financial assistance, working with appropriate information and communication technology.

through its various initiatives

'Smiles of Unity' Short Film Competition



The inaugural 'Smiles of Unity' Short Film Competition is about celebrating the interpretation of unity expressed through short films and the variety of methods now used to create them.

Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak (YPS), a foundation promoting unity, is looking for budding filmmakers amongst students, aspiring amateurs through to professionals, to submit their finest work, whether created on HD-capable camera or mobile phones. The only criterion is – entries have to be based on the unity concept in Sarawak's context.

A shortlist of the best films will be chosen by our panel which includes industry experts and the winners will take home great cash prizes!



2004 – 2014 GROWING YEARS

Developing and initiating programs and activities that celebrate diversity and harmonious relations in Sarawak, working especially with young leaders and young people. The focus was very much on conversations and expressions of thoughts, ideas and insights. They took the form of dialogues, forum, camp, roundtable.

Documentations of unity took place during this period through both the electronic and print media. Short-films and compilation of stories became significant additions to the programs and activities.

2015 – till present MOVING FORWARD

The urgent need to capture and record community stories of unity led to more documentation work being done. These include arts, food, local sports such as regatta, traditional games, religious and cultural observances and celebrations. They created a huge repertoire to the YPS to explore.

Contemporary elements such as the use of digital platforms come into play. These digital media provide the perfect solution in terms of reaching out to the wider audience.

Conversations
**FATHER MARK
BONCHOL**

First Secretary to the Board of
Trustees, YPS (2000 – 2012)



YPS : Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak or YPS celebrated her 28th Anniversary on 16th May. Please share with us how it all started.

Father Mark : If memory serves me correct and reading all the relevant and available files from the earlier years, YPS actually started with the idea of setting up the Yayasan Abdul Taib Mahmud. The idea then was to look into the various policies of the Chief Minister such as his politics of development, and his vision for Sarawak and so forth. When this idea was proposed to the Chief Minister, he counter-proposed instead. He suggested that we look into something bigger, something uniquely different about us as Sarawakians, our Sarawak cohesion or Sarawak unity.

YPS was registered as a company limited by guarantee (CLBG) and as such during the early years, various regulatory requirements and documentation were needed.

I think the first activity that was organised by YPS was a seminar together with the Sarawak Backbenchers Club (SBBC). I became the Executive Secretary to the Board of Trustees sometime in the year 2000.

YPS : What were some of the challenges when YPS first started? How did you tackle these challenges?

Father Mark : Basically, the first challenge was it was a one-man show. I had to do everything on my own, there were no staff to assist. Also, the issue of timing in terms of organising activities. It was not easy to get the Board members to meet due to their tight work schedule.

In 2012 I think, it was decided that we establish a working relation with the Sarawak Development Institute (SDI) so that they could assist YPS in executing certain programs. In other words, SDI became the secretariat to YPS.

Only then we were able to organise a series of dialogues and engagement where we share Sarawak's story of unity with young people in Miri, Mukah and Kuching. We

also talked on the importance of voluntarism and how to get Sarawakians to volunteer in activities that could contribute to the betterment of the state.

The *International Youth Cultural Conference* was the first major event that the YPS organised.

YPS has more visibility and the presence is felt now in society.

YPS : What do you think of YPS' achievement now? Are there any areas that you would like to be enhanced or expanded?

Father Mark : YPS has done much and the best part is, it has a logo (adopted in 2011) meaning it has a face, an identity. It has its own office, a permanent address, a place to call home if you like, and of course the staff who are able to carry out many activities with the youth and the public. With all these essentials in place, the YPS can then drive further its unity agenda.

In 2015, Kuching was declared a City of Unity. This declaration in a way, reinforced the whole reason for the birth of YPS.

I see a great future for YPS. However, it must also put its ears close to the ground, so to speak and remind Sarawakians the importance of protecting and promoting what we have now, our unity. YPS should see itself as the keeper and promoter of this unity.

YPS : What are some words of advice that you would like to share with YPS on her anniversary?

Father Mark : My advice would be to carry on with unity. This is what we believe in and this is what the future for Sarawak is. We should carry on with good and noble values.

It was an honour to be part of YPS, even though it was hard work, but it was fun for me. I saw in a way the values of YPS and hopefully these values will be carried on to the future.

QUICK TAKE

Kuching was declared as a **City of Unity** by Yayasan Perpaduan Malaysia (formerly known as Yayasan 1Malaysia) based on its racial harmony, multi-racial schools, fair scholarship distributions and balanced workforce patterns. The idea was mooted by Dr. Peter Kedit, a member of the Yayasan's Board of Trustees and was then adopted at a meeting of the Yayasan in December 2014. On 1st August, 2015, Kuching was proclaimed the country's first **City of Unity** and serves to be a role model for other cities and towns in Malaysia, and other parts of the world.

(Please refer to <https://perpaduan.org/2015/05/27/kuching-bandaraya-perpaduan-city-of-unity>)



DID YOU
MISS OUT
ON OUR
PREVIOUS
ISSUES?



Contact us

CommUnity is published monthly by Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak. We welcome any suggestions or contributions to further improve your experience with our newsletter.

Thank you.

Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak

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