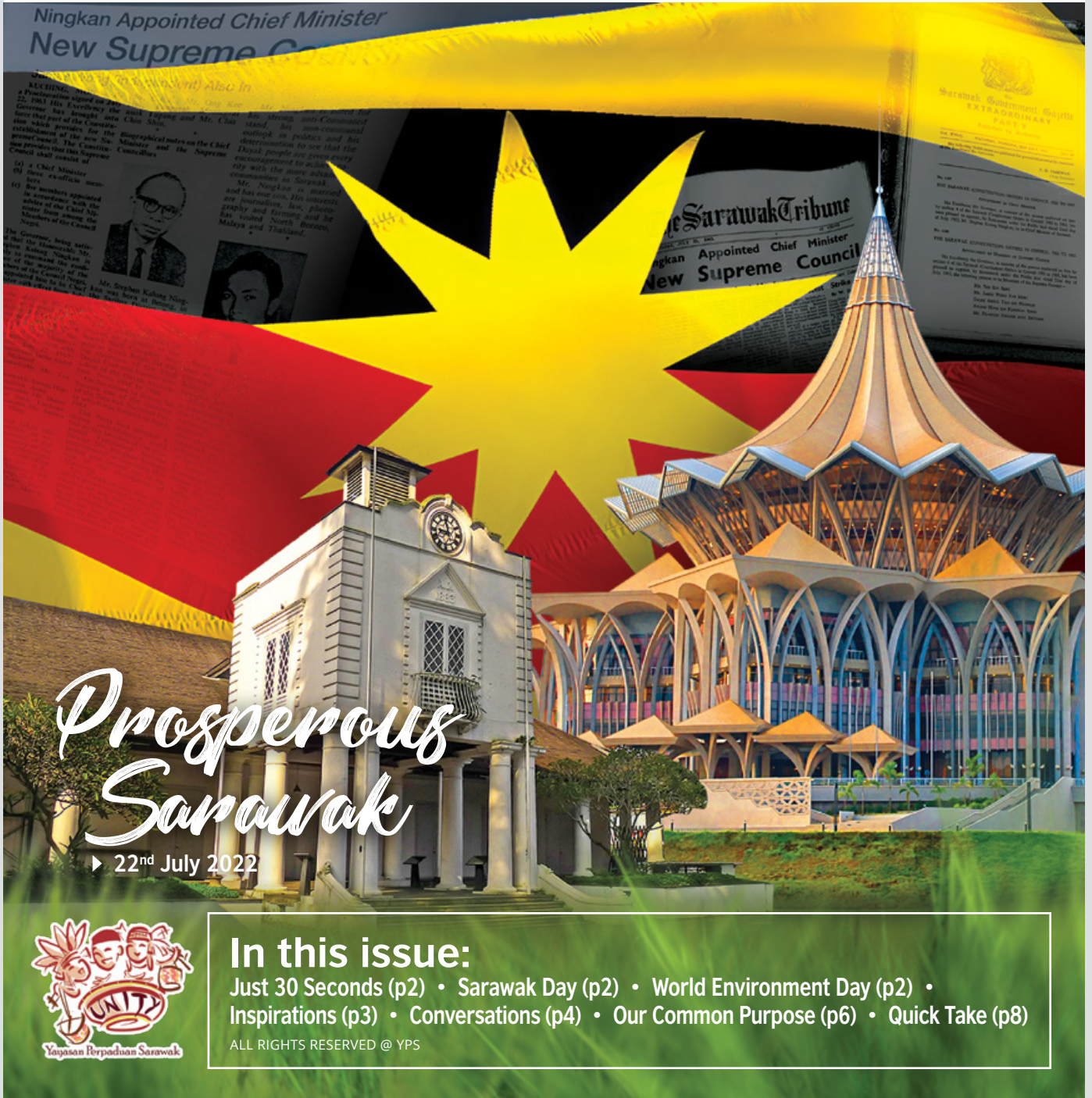


# CommUnity

*Communicating Unity*

JUNE-JULY 2022



Ningkan Appointed Chief Minister  
New Supreme Council

Sarawak Tribune  
Ningkan Appointed Chief Minister  
New Supreme Council

*Prosperous  
Sarawak*

► 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022



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# JUST 30 SECONDS

June is a month to observe Mother Nature and our symbiotic relationship with her. It is also a month to celebrate the diversity of our cultures through music.

- i. **Only one Earth** . . . the theme for this year's World Environment Day (celebrated on 5<sup>th</sup> June)
- ii. **Revitalization: Collective Action for the Ocean** . . . the theme for this year's World Ocean Day (celebrated on 8<sup>th</sup> June)
- iii. **Rising up from drought together** . . . the theme for this year's World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (celebrated on 17<sup>th</sup> June)

For this issue, we decided to talk to 3 young personalities, between the ages of 20s and 30s, about their passion to play an active role in conservation and protecting of the environment and what it means to live sustainably.

Living sustainably also means looking at our policies and our leaders. We are indeed happy that the Chairperson of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPGM) on Sustainable Development Goals, YB Dato Sri Hajah Rohani Binti Abdul Karim agreed to share with us on the roles of the APPGM in localising the SDGs.

The much-awaited Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) kicked off its 25<sup>th</sup> edition this month, through music workshops, cultural displays, craft displays, food stalls, and main-stage evening concerts.

I hope our readers would be inspired not only to live harmoniously together, but more importantly to be in harmony with our environment!

Happy reading.

Thank you.

**Datu Aloysius J. Dris**

Chief Executive  
Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak



**Sarawak Day** or **Sarawak Independence Day** is celebrated on 22<sup>nd</sup> July each year, since 2016. 22<sup>nd</sup> July was declared a public holiday by the late Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Adenan Satem on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016. It is a day to celebrate and enhance awareness on Sarawak's history besides honouring her past leaders.

## SELF-GOVERNING SARAWAK 1963

### 27<sup>th</sup> May 1961

proposed merger between the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo (Sabah) and Brunei.

### 1962

Lord Cameron Cobbold conducted a referendum amongst Sarawakians on the proposed Federation of Malaysia.

### 9<sup>th</sup> July 1963

Malaysia Agreement signed by Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1963

The birth of Sarawak as a self-governing country, and the end of the colonial rule when Sir Alexander Waddell (Governor of Sarawak) issued a proclamation to form the first Supreme Council with Stephen Kalong Ningkan as the first Chief Minister of Sarawak.

The other members of the Supreme Council were Abdul Taib Mahmud, James Wong Kim Ming, Dunstan Endawie Anak Enchana, Awang Hipni Pengiran Anu and Teo Kui Seng.

*Extracted from Sarawak, 50 Golden years of Harmony & Prosperity, 2013.*



World Environment Day

The **World Environment Day** is celebrated every year on June 5<sup>th</sup> by millions of people across the globe. The main focus is to remind people the importance of the environment and not to take her for granted.

First observed in 1973, it is a celebration which according to the United Nations, *provides us with an opportunity to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises, and communities in preserving and enhancing the environment.*

This year the theme is **Only One Earth** with the focus on **Living Sustainably in Harmony with Nature**.

*Please refer to <https://www.unep.org/events/un-day/world-environment-day-2022>*



# Inspirations

The World Environment Day was celebrated on 5<sup>th</sup> June this year with the theme **Only One Earth** which advocates for transformative environmental change on a global scale. We talked to 3 young personalities, passionate on what they do and what it means to live sustainably in harmony with nature.

1. How can we make sustainable living available, affordable and attractive for everyone?
2. What actions can we as individuals take to be more in harmony with nature, instead of harming it?

## MARK LIAO (20s)



Founded the Sarawak Eco-warriors about 5 years ago, focusing on conservation work especially beach clean-

ups together with the **Kuching Beach Cleaners**. 2019 was the peak of their work when they counted and documented items that people discarded on the beach. The number of items collected was indeed dumbfounding - 80,000!

We need to change our thinking that conservation is a luxurious affair where only certain members of society can afford to be a part of. Most importantly we have to be mindful of what we do every day, like being more considerate of the household wastes that we produce. **The simplest action makes the biggest difference.** We are part of nature and whatever we do actually in the long run is for our own survival.



Bags of trash collected from the beach clean-ups!

## BATRISYIA TEEPOL (20s)



Batrisyia, Vice Chairperson of the Malaysian Nature Society Kuching Branch, is a recipient of the Conservation Leadership Award

where her research focuses on the migratory shorebirds at Bako-Buntal Bay.

Sustainable living is very much associated with the quality of our lives. It is about making wise choices from affordable options out there to giving a second life to some items. For example, from recycling activities, we could save and repurpose materials we have for our own use or for the community's use. We all have to play our part in conserving and protecting our environment. Join nature clubs, interact with nature and be more conscious and knowledgeable about the importance of sustainable living. After all, we only have one Earth to call home.



A mix flock of shorebirds ranging from Godwits to Knots. (Photo credit: Batrisyia Teepol).

## MOHD SAIFULLAH HAINI (30s)



Seph or Mohamad Saifullah Haini is the CEO of Spativate, a media platform which he founded in 2016. Spativate highlights local sustainability champion stories and organises creative community initiatives such as the *Urbins*, ping pong

games and provides free meals for *buka puasa* during Ramadhan.

Sometimes sustainability is a word that is overly used. I make this less "jargony" by coining the phrase **happy place, happier people**, in line with **SDG-11 sustainable cities and sustainable communities**. For instance, the *Pustaka Negeri Sarawak* where you have *zumba*, it brings people together and makes people happy. That to me, is availability and affordability.

Now the attractive part of sustainability. For instance, recycling. Recycling is like hard sale and not many people are keen to the idea. But what if you make the recycling bins attractive, make them a conversation piece? That was how my *Urbins* project came about.

We can apply the **LQC – lighter, quicker and cheaper** approach to sustainable community projects, instead of making things so serious and off-putting to people. So, when we talk about *Only One Earth*, it is not only about the environment, but about the people and our journey together.



*Urbins* – making bins attractive.



Malaysia's Initiatives on Localising SDGs @ New York.

*Conversations*  
**YB DATO SRI  
 HAJAH ROHANI BINTI  
 ABDUL KARIM**

Member of Parliament (P 201)  
 Chairman of All-Party Parliamentary  
 Group Malaysia (APPGM) SDG

**YPS : The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. What role does the APPGM play in SDGs?**

**YBDS HJH ROHANI :** The APPGM-SDG was set up in 2019. It is bi-partisan. However, it is required that the Chair is from government backbenchers. We have 8 committee members and as the Chair, I have to make sure that our discussion centres only on SDGs.

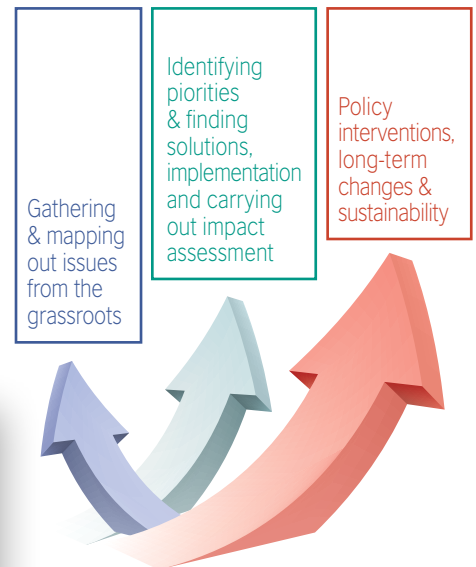
The **Civil Society Alliance** (with a team of researchers) acts as our Secretariat and I would like to mention here that 6 out of 10 suggestions put forth by APPGM-SDG were taken up by the government to overcome the problems of climate change and flooding.

In APPGM-SDG, we agreed that each Member of Parliament is the champion of SDGs in their respective constituencies. Let me give you an example the steps we took, from my constituency Batang Lupar, on how we localised SDGs.

First, we had a 3-day meet with the people to understand their problems. We worked together with the ADUNs (Sebuyau, Beting Maro and Lingga), the villagers, district officers, relevant government agencies, Ketua Masyarakat or Ketua Kaum. We talked about poverty, drug addiction, low catch by the fishermen, expensive fertilisers and many other local concerns.

Next, we organised a meeting with the researchers to prioritise these problems. Then we must look for solution providers to resolve these problems or do the hand holding.

**LOCALISING SDGs**



With the financial support from the government, we were able to localise SDGs in 30 constituencies (from 2020 - 2021) and we expect to carry out another 26 this year (2022). The United Nations is very happy with what we are doing because they can see real problem-solving efforts.

To ensure the success of the project, we have specific timelines where progress reports are submitted quarterly.



YBDS Hjh Rohani at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York.



Also, we have stringent monitoring by the Ministry of Finance, the Economic Planning Unit and the Speaker of Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives).

**YPS : At the Malaysian Conservation Conference 2022, our YAB Premier stated that Sarawak is going to develop her own Sustainable Sarawak Blueprint, which is aligned to the development goals of SDGs. How do you see this positive commitment from our leaders?**

**YBDS HJH ROHANI :** I am very happy that our YAB Premier is having this in mind, not only aligning Sarawak to the national agenda but also to the global agenda. In 2030 we will have to report to the United Nations on our SDG progress. Countries from Europe, the Commonwealth and ASEAN are keen to know our works in localising SDGs.

I believe more conversations and collaborations are needed for us to mainstream SDGs, and this could provide inputs perhaps to the Sustainable Sarawak blueprint. We go by the tagline *leaving no one behind*.

**YPS : How do we localise or mainstream SDGs so that there is a real buy-in from our people on the critical role that each one of us play on this planet? Do we pick and choose the SDG roles based on our needs?**

**YBDS HJH ROHANI :** Yes, we have to do that. We must listen to the people, establish awareness and capacity building exercises, get to the root of the problems, prioritise the problems, that's when the eureka moment came. Localising of SDGs becomes workable once the rakyat understand what you're talking about.

**YPS : Please share with us some challenges that you foresee in localising SDGs.**

**YBDS HJH ROHANI :** Since we started, there are a few lessons that we learned in our efforts to localise SDGs:

1. Strengthening **grassroots leadership**. Only by doing so, can we get everyone on-board.
2. Strengthening **Civil Society Organisations'** participation in SDGs. In Sarawak, especially in the rural areas, we still are lacking the ones to *hold hand* (or solution providers) because universities are not well spread out. Even if we do have these solution providers, they do not have an in-depth knowledge of the available resources, or an understanding of local issues, local cultures and languages.
3. **Accessibility** to digital technology especially in the rural areas. For

instance, if the researchers require information instantaneously, they would be hampered by the lack of a good coverage.

There are many success stories such as our mushroom projects in Jeli (Kelantan) and the handphone repair project in Ulu Rejang. As of now, we have more than 500 solution projects in place, which benefitted the people.

**YPS : Would you say that because of the uniqueness of our people, the seamless harmonious relations that we have, we could in fact lead in localising or mainstreaming SDGs?**

**YBDS HJH ROHANI :** Yes, that's one of them. We can use this bond of unity and harmony to overcome all adversities such as the flood and in fact achieve the 17 SDGs together, leaving no one behind. After all it's from the people, for the people.



*Conversations is a platform where we exchange thoughts, ideas and seek advice from Sarawakians of varied backgrounds on contemporary topics and how they relate to unity and harmonious relations.*

# OUR COMMON PURPOSE

**Our Common Purpose** endeavours to capture not only the programs and activities of YPS but also other organisations (government departments, NGOs, corporate bodies and individuals) in Sarawak that work towards one common purpose - enhancing unity and solidarity in the State.



## UNITY LABS

In line with the National Unity Policy, YPS has been conducting a series of webinars and workshops under its flagship **Advancing Racial Cohesion & Harmony (ARCH)** since 2021.

With the aim to evaluate national unity and assess inter-racial harmony among the various ethnic groups in Sarawak, YPS kicked off its Unity Labs in May this year. Unity labs, the final segments of ARCH, started off in the Northern Region (Limbang & Miri) in May, followed by the Central Region (Bintulu, Mukah, Sibü & Kapit) in June whilst for the Southern Region (Bau, Kota Samarahan & Kuching), these labs start in July.

For these 6 locations, the labs were attended by about 200 participants comprising government officers, representatives from various NGOs, youths and community leaders.





# RANDAU SOLIDARITI KOMUNITI (COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY FORUM)

Majlis Pembangunan Sosial (MPS)

Ministry of Women, Early Childhood & Community Well-being Development Sarawak

**Randau Solidariti Komuniti (RSK)** is an initiative of the Majlis Pembangunan Sosial with the main objective of appreciating and strengthening the values of unity and solidarity in our communities. Through these noble values, the communities could work closely together to tackle social issues and ensure public safety. The theme for this year's RSK is **Solidarity is the cornerstone of a community's well-being**.

Since 2020, the Majlis Pembangunan Sosial has conducted 44 runs of the RSK. About 12,000 participants from various age groups, ethnicities and localities in Sarawak took part in the RSKs.





# QUICK TAKE

The Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) started in 1998 with an audience of only 300 people. Now it is one of the major events in Sarawak's music calendar, attracting more than 20,000 people from near and far. The festival brings together international and local performers who share not only their music, but also their cultures.



Courtesy of BorneoTalk



## Contact us

CommUnity is published once every 2 months by Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak. We welcome any suggestions or contributions to further improve your experience with our newsletter.

Thank you.

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**DID YOU  
MISS OUT  
ON OUR  
PREVIOUS  
ISSUES?**

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**NOTE :** Starting July, CommUnity will be published bimonthly (once every 2 months).