

CommUnity

Communicating Unity

JANUARY 2022



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Just 30 seconds

Wishing all our readers a Happy New Year 2022.

Much has happened since our newsletter Community was successfully rolled out on 7th December 2021 by our Chief Minister YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, in a modest ceremony whilst strictly adhering to the SOP. Thank you YAB the Chief Minister.

I would also like to accord our highest appreciation to our Chairman TYT Tun Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, for making time to share his thoughts on unity and his hopes for Sarawak.

For this issue, our conversation focus is on education as we celebrate the International Day of Education on 24th January. We also share some highlights from the launch of our newsletter.

Happy reading.

Thank you.

Datu Aloysius J. Dris
Chief Executive
Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak

Headlines

Foundation expounds unity through newsletter

Tania Lam
Published Wednesday, 08 Dec 2021, 02:59 am • Modified Wednesday, 08 Dec 2021



Abang Johari (second left) receives a souvenir from Jabu as (from third left) Chan and Ovis look on. Photo: CMO

KUCHING: Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak (YPS) has rolled out its inaugural newsletter entitled 'CommUnity - Communicating Unity' on Thursday (Dec 7).

CM: Sarawak could be equivalent with Singapore or better in Global Happiness Index

Dec 7, 2021 @ 11:07

By Adrian Lim

KUCHING, Dec 7: Sarawak could rank on par with Singapore or even better on the Global Happiness Index, asserts Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg.

He said Singapore was ranked 11th in the Global Happiness Index but Malaysia was ranked 24th.

YPS diminta terus berperanan bantu pupuk perpaduan

Pupuk perpaduan dalam kalangan pelbagai kaum di Sarawak menerusi komunikasi digital YPS: KM

44 Dalam komunikasi digital kini ia sangat berkesan berbanding dahulu di mana kita memerlukan maklumat menerusi media cetak sahaja. 33

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阿邦佐：全球幸福指数报告，新排名11马24差很远

《古晋7日讯》砂首长拿督巴丁宜阿邦佐哈里指出，砂拉越被标签为一个多元化州属，首脑也意识到砂越团结精神，进而推出“一个马来西亚”（Satu Malaysia）和“大马一家”（Keluarga Malaysia）的概念，因为砂拉越就是一个榜样例子。

阿邦佐哈里说，砂各族可以互相理解，砂人关系非常和谐，自古以来代代相传。有些马来同胞会在教会学校或国际学校就读，得以了解彼此文化。

“砂也设立其他宗教单位，扩大各族相互理解。宗教主要是宣传正确价值观，我们有责任维护宗教和平，这在其他州属无法看到的，只有在砂拉越。”

Sarawak Tribune • Dec 8, 2021

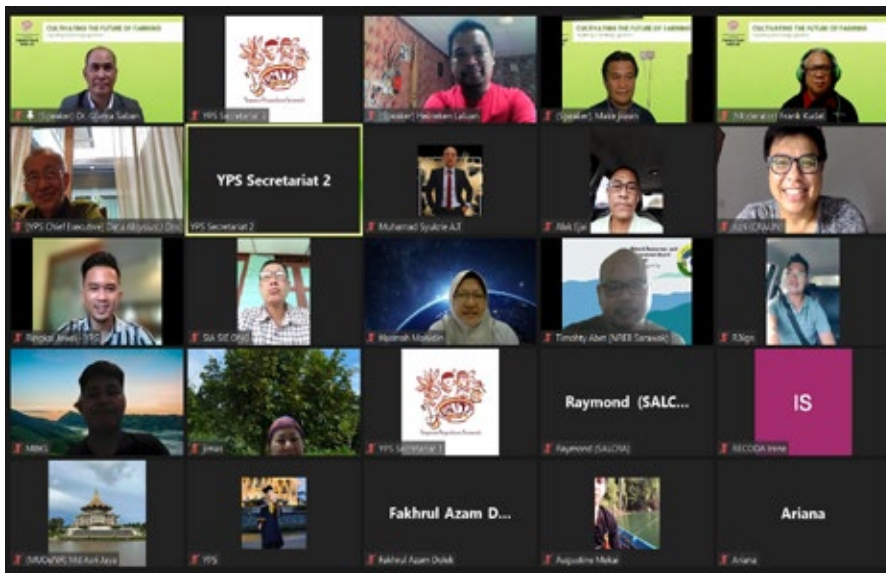
Dayak Daily • Dec 7, 2021

Utusan Borneo • Dec 8, 2021

Sin Chew • Dec 7, 2021

Harmonious Sarawak

With a vision of creating a *peaceful and harmonious Sarawak through understanding, and an appreciation of cultural diversity for future generations*, YPS organised a series of documentaries and webinars last year, under the flagship **Things that bind us**. These include areas such as agriculture and textile and their roles in enhancing unity and solidarity amongst the peoples of Sarawak.



About **SUARA**

This project's decisions will be geared towards building Sarawak's unity and future together against uncertainties and risks as well as radical challenges such as the unprecedented pandemic. Subsequently, this may create a shared vision in developing the state from the grassroots level to the top administration of the state. The project will adopt a bottom-up approach to foster the sense of belonging and participation among youth in the state's development. The state government has been seeking solutions to the welfare of the people in Sarawak and has been preparing for the future of the next generations. Therefore, it is only fitting to start the state's discussion with the youth as we are preparing for the future of the state's generation. A series of workshops will be held across the state in the main division which are Kuching, Kota Bharu and Miri. In order to be more inclusive, youth from districts in the proximity of Kuching, Kota Bharu and Miri will be invited. The project will address the domains of unity and future building of Sarawak such as socioeconomic development, political participation and activation of youth, intergenerational understanding, religious harmony and shared vision and identity. At the end of this project, selected and successful participants will have the opportunity to have a dialogue session with the Chief Minister of Sarawak at Istana Raja Mahkota. This session will create the opportunity for the participants to present their ideas and recommendations as the outcomes of the series of workshops to the chief minister.

OBJECTIVES

This project seeks to achieve the following objectives and goals:

- ① **Encouraging Participation**
 To create a participatory space for collaborative engagements between the youth and the highest administrative body in Sarawak which is geared towards charting the direction of Sarawak in a new canvas in a post-pandemic environment.
- ② **Gathering Insights**
 To obtain views and aspirations from the participants at the grass root level on where they see Sarawak in the future especially in the areas related to unity.
- ③ **A Listening Government**
 To leverage on the nature of the Sarawak state government as a listening and inclusive government in giving opportunities to future leaders in shaping the future Sarawak by gathering ideas and perspectives from the youth.

For 2022, YPS will continue running the **ARCH (Advancing Racial Cohesion & Harmony)** project with a series of workshops based on the National Unity Policy.

YPS will also be organising **SUARA (Strength through Unity, Alliance & Responsive Action)** in major divisions in Sarawak – Kuching, Miri, Bintulu and Sib. SUARA comprises workshops especially with young people so as to gather their perspectives, aspirations and concerns on the future of Sarawak as they relate to unity and harmonious relations.

Inspirations

Our Chairman, His Excellency Tun Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, shared his thoughts and hopes for Sarawak in a special message during the roll-out ceremony of the newsletter. Some of His Excellency's thoughts and advice on the importance of language, cultural traditions and unity are captured here.

i. **Perpaduan** adalah satu proses yang menggambarkan persetujuan kita untuk *mengenal kebaikan serta warisan* dari banyak kaum yang menjadi rakyat kita. *Multiracial Sarawak, multi-racial* Malaysia adalah suatu tanda hubungan kita di antara berbagai kaum yang telah berjaya menghasilkan bentuk-bentuk baru kerana rakyat kita telah mempunyai kesedaran dan keinginan untuk memahami perasaan dan latarbelakang budaya dari pelbagai kaum.



ii. **Bahasa** – kita bukan sahaja perlu mengetahui satu bahasa tetapi kita perlu mempunyai satu bahasa yang boleh menyampaikan kepada masyarakat tentang kanzah atau kebudayaan kita yang boleh memperelokkan cara hidup kita. Ini adalah cara yang paling baik mendirikan *bangsa yang bersatu padu* tanpa paksaan tetapi muncul kerana adanya hubungan baik di antara satu sama lain. Saya percaya ini akan jadi satu cara hidup bagi kita pada masa akan datang.

Setiap kaum ada tutur kata yang cantik yang boleh kita gunakan sebagai bahan untuk menarik orang lain menggunakannya. Oleh itu hubungan antara kaum merupakan satu bentuk gaya hidup yang boleh menyebarkan segala bentuk kebaikan yang ada melalui *bahasa dan budaya* kita. Proses ini sangat lambat tapi akan menggambarkan banyak pengalaman baru hasil daripada interaksi antara kaum.

iii. **Pertukaran pemikiran** – Yang paling penting ialah kita menggalakkan pertukaran pemikiran di kalangan rakyat kita. Masyarakat kita menerima pengaruh-pengaruh dari luar ataupun pemikiran-pemikiran yang baru daripada orang-orang yang terpelajar dan berperanan dan ianya adalah satu proses yang terus berjalan. Kita perlu menggalakkan masyarakat untuk menjalankan kegiatan-kegiatan yang boleh menimbulkan pemikiran yang cukup baik, yang cukup halus bagi menggerakkan pemikiran orang lain.



At the launch of the newsletter, YAB the Chief Minister emphasized on 3 pertinent points – the spirit of **unity in diversity**, **digital communication** and **universal values**.

- i. **Unity in diversity** – Sarawak provides an example of real unity in diversity which was acknowledged by top leaders of Malaysia. Our *bond of understanding or bond of friendship* goes beyond ethnicity to include religious groups, which is quite difficult to find in other parts of the country.
- ii. **Digital Communication** – Digital communication is important for development especially in the field

of agriculture, tourism, education and health-care. Communicating digitally allows all kinds of information to be shared or transmitted. We have to play our roles so that the information that is being fed through this new mode of communication, especially among the young people, would not put us in a difficult situation.

- iii. **Universal values** – To sustain our unity, we must inculcate and pass on positive values to our younger generation. Our social development agenda must be directed towards that.

Conversations



In conjunction with the **International Day of Education**, which is celebrated on 24th January, we talked to **Prof Ida Fatimawati bt Adi Badiozaman**, the Executive Dean of Research and the Director of the Centre for Education Research, Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus. It was indeed an enlightening conversation on education and its role in national unity.

YPS : National unity and integration (or solidarity) has been the focus and concern of most of our leaders, since these are one of the ingredients for a sustained prosperity of our people. In the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025), one of the 5 system aspirations is Unity, besides **Access, Quality, Equity and Efficiency**. In your opinion, where are we now in terms of national unity?

Prof Ida : Multiple, often conflicting frames are involved in making sense of 'national unity' for different stakeholders. The 5-system aspiration is inspirational and is aligned with the sustainable development goals. In the Malaysian context national unity and integration is complex due to our socio-economic history. However, I do believe that we are making progress, maybe not equally in all areas but foundation has been placed – especially in Sarawak, where we are beginning to have those difficult conversations about rights, citizenship.

Due to the complexity of the socioeconomic and political environment, managing the perception of the citizens is paramount in ensuring continued and true national unity in the country. Without national unity, not only will the economic development of the country be hampered but the collective happiness of the citizens will also be reduced.

YPS : And living in this new norm, how can we achieve national unity? Or it's simply impossible with all the constraints and lack of accessibility to education? What critical elements should be in place in this new norm to enhance or strengthen unity among Malaysians?

Prof Ida : Achieving national unity requires multiple stakeholders. This is quite a complex goal to achieve and a process that would not happen overnight. All citizens must feel and believe that the country is their home and that the institutions in the country will protect their legitimate rights.

They must also believe that in this country, they, their children, their friends and all citizens will have the opportunity to achieve their dreams without state interference and unjust discrimination. At the same time, the state will facilitate the achievement of the dreams of those hardworking and dedicated citizens. Such a belief and perception will naturally give birth to patriotism and the desire to be united for the common good.

Education is one way where this can be done formally—infused in curriculum, across various subjects and at all educational levels. We have seen people put aside their differences and strive for a common goal, especially during the pandemic or during any crisis for that matter. I believe this is promising and we should leverage on this in sustaining such practices or beliefs. An underlying core is compassion and humanity. We have seen how people embrace the crisis, the disruption and focus on things that matter like well-being, unity, health. I do hope that moving forward, it would not take a crisis for us to band together

YPS : The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24th January as the **International Day of Education**, in celebration of the role of education for peace and development. How do you see our roles here? At the state or national level? Or even at the individual and community levels?

Prof Ida : Leadership can happen at all levels. I do not believe in waiting for

opportunities, I believe that we should create them. As an educator, I believe in the value of education as transcending subject matter knowledge. We talk about soft skills; these are human skills, empathy, kindness, compassion. We can embed this through all our teaching-learning activities, the training and research that we do. No one can work in silos, we should consolidate all the resources and expertise to attain peace and development within the state ecosystem.

Without inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong opportunities for all, countries will not succeed in achieving gender equality and breaking the cycle of poverty that is leaving millions of children, youth and adults behind.

YPS : Sarawak has always been regarded as a model state in terms of unity and harmonious co-existence amongst its people. Please share with us your hopes for the future of unity in our country.

Prof Ida : Sarawak is known as the **Land of Unity** for all Sarawakians live together as one united and collective multiracial society. Treat everyone equally with all-encompassing tolerance, without differentiation and prejudice, to put the people's interests above our self-interests as if we are of the same family, ethnicity and identity. Public lectures and dialogues should be organised across Malaysia by the Sarawak government so that the public, especially the younger generation, will be aware of and look up to Sarawak's success in multiculturalism. Enhanced racial tolerance among the ethnic groups in Sarawak was their mutual respect and the emphasis given by their political parties to development for all. The unity that exists in Sarawak is something we can all be proud of and should be preserved at all costs. In Sarawak, unity is already a way of life. Moving towards cultural appreciation, which is beyond just accepting our multi-cultural society or tolerance.





Tabika Perpaduan Ong Tiang Swee Dahlia



Tabika Perpaduan Tabuan Dayak

Pictures courtesy of JPNIN Sarawak

Quick Take

Tabika Perpaduan was first introduced in 1976 by the Community Relations Plan, National Unity Board, Prime Minister's Department. The main goal of its establishment was to foster the spirit of goodwill and inter-racial unity from young. A total of 25 Tabika Perpaduan classes were established as part of a pilot project in selected suburbs and cities. As of December 2021, there was a total of 1,781 Tabika Perpaduan nationwide. There are 172 of these Tadika Perpaduan in Sarawak – Kuching (43), Samarahan (6), Serian (2), Sri Aman (9), Betong (6), Sarikei (11), Sibü (13), Mukah (5), Kapit (8), Bintulu (16), Miri (36), Limbang (10) and Lawas (7).

For more information of the Tabika Perpaduan, please refer to <https://www.jpnin.gov.my>



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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