

CommUnity

Communicating Unity

JANUARY 2024

In Celebration
of

2023

"There cannot exist a strong Sarawak unless all races bring Sarawak together"

- Tun Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, 1989
Chairman

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In just a minute

Greetings.

The year 2023 has past and gone, but memories, especially on the success we reaped from the year remain and was documented as part of Yayasan Perpaduan's success stories.

In April, we welcomed our new Communications Manager, Ben Jimbau. He is an industry veteran in marketing, public relations, and corporate branding.

2023 saw our brand being communicated directly to the general public with the formation of our Sape Ambassadors, a multiracial youth musical group specialising in Sape as a tool to unite. Making their stage appearances at the Borneo Cultural Festival, the Baram Regatta, the Sarawak Regatta and the New Year Countdown 2024, bringing the narrative of Unity in Diversity and Segulai Sejalai.

Our aim to move on with our corporate mission of empowering the youth fared very well, capitalising on current trends, including media, and financial literacy supported by our social media platforms.

Our effort to document the unity efforts of the past materialised with the completion of the regatta documentary and the data gathering for the publication of the book "Regatta: its history and significance in Sarawak".

In a nutshell, it is all about our business of promoting unity. Browse through the pages to catch the glimpse of what we did through 2023, and do let us know your comments and suggestions.

Happy reading!

Datu Aloysius J. Dris
Chief Executive

News Flash



Foundation urges Sarawakians uphold 'Segulai Sejalai' as heartbeat of State's unity, strength

Jan 1, 2024 @ 8:00



Tun Pehin Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud

KUCHING, Jan 1: Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak (YPS) calls upon all Sarawakians to persist in fostering a shared understanding and genuine respect for one another, transcending diversity and differences to reflect the true local saying of 'Segulai Sejalai' (together in unity in Iban language) that has been proudly embraced as a unity slogan in Malaysia.

YPS chairman Tun Pehin Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud hopes the New Year will bring Sarawakians closer together.

Emphasising the importance of acknowledging respective roles and sincerely respecting each other's backgrounds, cultures, and religious differences, he believes this will continue to nurture common understanding and serve as a formidable binding force among fellow Sarawakians.

TYT terima kunjungan hormat Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak

© 2023-05-22T21:47:54+08:00



Taib semasa menerima kunjungan hormat daripada Dr Chan (dua kiri) dan Aloysius (kanan). -Gambar PENERANGAN

KUCHING:Yang di-Pertua Negeri Tun Pehin Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud menerima kunjungan hormat daripada Timbalan Pengerusi Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak (YPS) Datuk Fatinggi Tan Sri Dr George Chan.

Inspirations

VILLAGE HEAD OF KAMPUNG PICHIN

MR. RIOI

ANAK LAGIT, KAMPUNG PICHIN, SERIAN



1. HOW IS "UNITY" IN YOUR KAMPUNG IN THE 60'S AND 70'S?

Kampung Pichin, was well known, especially in the 60's and 70's for its hospitality to everyone, including visitors from other races, nearby kampung and anyone that walks in the Kampung. It has been a requirements and part of our customs and tradition to treat all visitors well.

2. HOW DO YOU COMPARE IT AT YOUR KAMPUNG RIGHT NOW?

Our tradition and customs of taking care of our visitors, regardless of their race is still strong these days. More so when there are more interracial marriages, friendships arising from workplace influence of the social media platforms that encourage visits from all people of various races.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK, "UNITY IN DIVERSITY" CAN WORK IN YOUR KAMPUNG.

It works, but only with better understanding and appreciation of each other's belief, customs and traditions. It is everyone's duty to remind ourselves of the spirit of tolerance and being respectful.

4. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR ADVISES TO THE YOUNGER GENERATION IN YOUR AREAS ON THE PROPAGATION OF UNITY?

Stand strong as what your elders teaches you. Be kind, be respectful to everyone and live peacefully, respecting each other in all aspect of life.



FOUNDER OF AJAKCUT BARBERSHOP

HARISH

BIN ABDULLAH, MELANAU FROM MUKAH, 28

1. WHAT IS YOUR IDEA (YOUTH POINT OF VIEW) OF A UNITED SARAWAK?

Everyone should work together. Sarawakian are known to be able to accept and tolerate one another, thus it is obvious or generally more apparent that there are less racial issues despite the fact that Sarawak has various ethnic groupings.

2. THE MULTIRACIAL COMPOSITION OF YOUTHS IN SARAWAK. WHAT IS YOUR OBSERVATION OF BEING UNITED IN DIVERSITY TODAY?

Our youths can easily congregate, inclusive of online interaction, thus can certainly facilitate exchanges of ideas. People of different races are able to learn to speak one other's language; For example, Melanau in Mukah can speak Iban proficiently while Ibans equally speak Melanau fluently. It's the same as Chinese individuals who can speak Melanau or Iban fluently. It is what I called a celebration of unity in diversity.

3. WHAT CAN BE POSSIBLE CAUSES OF DISUNITY ESPECIALLY AMONG THE YOUTH TODAY?

Differences in opinion is the most common source of conflict among today's youth beside competing for fame and status. Intolerance to criticism, differences in opinion and selective preferences including cronyism are among some obvious causes of disunity.

Our Sape Ambassadors

The Brand-Communicating Our Ideals



SAPE CAMP 2023

Leveraging on the Sape's popularity among youths in Sarawak, Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak organised a four-day Sape Camp held on June 19-22 in Kuching. The participants represented multi-racial Malaysian youths, having one common interest, to add Sape to their portfolio of musical interest. 15 young musicians representing major races in Sarawak, joined by two Sabahan from the Kadazan Dusun and Rungus communities, an Indian and an Orang Asli, were named Yayasan Sarawak Sape Ambassadors after their completion of a four-day intensive Sape Camp.



Respected figures in the Sape music industry, including Living National Heritage, Mathew Ngau Jau, renowned Sape legend, Jerry Kamit, composer, Narawi Rashidi, and UNIMAS Senior Lecturer, Dr. Connie Lim Keh Nie shared their enriching experiences in their lectures, practical sessions, stage performance techniques and even include a Sape-making demonstration.

They proudly received their Ambassadorship certificates from YPS Deputy Chairman, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Alfred Jabu at their "graduation" ceremony on June 22.

The camp promotes cultural diversity and appreciation while encouraging collaboration and dialogue among participants, breaking down barriers and cultivating a sense of belonging and friendship, reinforcing the idea that music and culture transcend borders and bringing people together.



BORNEO CULTURAL FESTIVAL

The participation of the YPS Sape Ambassadors performing on stage at the Borneo Cultural Festival 2023 in Sibul highlighted the essence of unity and diversity of our Malaysian youths, representing different races and cultural backgrounds.

The stage performance, held on Sunday, July 23, was the Ambassadors first stage appearance. It was a symbolic representation of unity, exemplifying how the universal language of Sape music can bring together individuals from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds playing repertoire of local favourite songs of the various communities in Sarawak including Perak's Orang Asli song.

YPS's reaching out programme through music was intended to reach a wider audience, allowing more people to understand and appreciate the organization's Mission and Vision.



SARAWAK REGATTA, THE SOUND OF BORNEO

Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak made another invitational appearance at the Sound of Borneo; Rhythm Sarawak stage show held in conjunction with the Sarawak Regatta 2023 and the Dragon Boat Festival on the evening of October 28 at the Kuching Waterfront.

YPS featured its 11 YPS Sape Ambassadors, of diverse ethnic group including the sole Rungus Ambassador who rendered a song, Sabah's local favourite, to the accompaniments of the Sape.

YPS took the opportunity to feature these talented Sape Ambassadors to remind Sarawakians of their diversity and Sape music brings and binds people together and help them learn from each other's uniqueness.



BARAM REGATTA 2023

After a five-year hiatus, the highly anticipated Baram Regatta 2023 finally returned to Marudi town on the weekend of September 28 to October 1. It was more than just thrilling race of strength and stamina but a celebration of unity, tradition, and Sarawak's rich cultural heritage.

Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak brought a new turn to this "Mother of all Regatta" introducing the coveted Piala Perpaduan with winning prizes of RM10,000.00 for the champion team, with the first and second runners up winning the RM8,000.00 and RM6,000.00 cash prizes. The Piala Perpaduan race perfectly aligns with the Vision and Mission of YPS in promoting unity, harmony, and preserving Sarawak's diverse cultures and traditions.

The Regatta's long cherished history, dated back to 1899, when it was initiated as a peacekeeping effort to resolve headhunting and tribal conflicts among ethnic communities in Baram.

It was all smiles from the winning team. The Tedung Melancar 8 were crowned the champions, Benerang 4 and Belalang 1 secured the well-deserved first and second runners up positions.

For the rest of the teams, 2025 will be another return to look forward to for these paddlers, trying to prove once again their strength and vying for the top spots in the race.

In celebration of the occasion, our Sape Ambassadors were privileged to be invited to perform at a stage show at the closing of the weekend regatta.

SARAWAK'S NEW YEAR COUNT DOWN 2024

The YPS Ambassadors was once again called by the Majlis Seni Sarawak (MSS) to participate in the 2023 countdown programme organised by the State Government on the eve of the new year, 2024.

It is indeed an honour to be able to feature our Sape Ambassadors, an indication of acceptance of our initiative in our role to promote Unity in Diversity. It was the Ambassadors' fourth public stage appearance, showcasing their Sape talents in the promotion of YPS' unity message.



Youth of Hope

Our 2023 reach-out programme were significant, focusing on selected audience particularly the youths and specialise Interest groups. It was well received and created an opportunity of another platform for YPS to share its Vision and Mission to our target audience.



YOUTH FINANCIAL LITERACY AND UNITY - Y-FLASH WORKSHOP EMPOWERS SARAWAK YOUTH

Y-FLASH Workshop, marking the beginning of a transformative journey towards financial literacy by creating a support group for empowerment and unity among the Sarawak's multicultural youth.

This project, organised to align with YPS's Vision and Mission, was dedicated to foster financial literacy, unity and informed financial choices among youths aged from 18 to 40.

At the heart of each Y-FLASH workshop were three key modules: Understanding Financial Behaviour, Financial Planning Tools, and Brighter Days Ahead. The program aligns seamlessly with Sarawak's Post COVID-19 Development Strategy 2030, emphasizing economic prosperity and social inclusivity.

The workshop was a melting pot of diverse backgrounds and professions, yet showcased a remarkable spirit of unity, exemplifying collaboration and presenting innovative ideas.

Thus far, more than 120 young Sarawakian, representing a diverse multi-racial backgrounds and professions benefitted from the programme.

YOUTH MEDIA LITERACY PROGRAMME

Media Edge: "A Youth Media Literacy Programme," aimed at educating and empowering Sarawakian youths with essential media literacy skills. This pioneering project seeks to equip young individuals with the tools needed to discern harmful narratives in media, fostering unity and harmony within the diverse communities of Sarawak.

The key objectives of the programme include fostering critical thinking and media analysis to cultivate a generation of informed individuals who can recognize between reliable media content, championing unity and harmony by promoting stronger relationships and harmonious ties among ethnic groups. The programme was in alignment with Sarawak's Post Covid-19 Development Strategy 2030 of social inclusivity, and encouraging youths to engage in civic conversations with confidence and discernment by providing them with essential media literacy skills.

To date, 323 students from 42 secondary schools in major towns in Sarawak benefited from the programme.



GRAND OUTREACH PROGRAMME AT LONG KESSEH, BARAM, MIRI

The Central School's three-day Camp began on August 18 with 127 participants from Kelab Pembangunan Kemahiran Sosial Kanak-Kanak Sekolah Luar Bandar dan Pendalaman Malaysia (REACH), Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak, Balai Bomba & Penyelamat Kota Kinabalu, Balai Polis Long Lama with SK Long Kesseh as a host school and invited students from nearby SK Long Naah, Sk Long Pillah, and Long Miri.

The programme made enduring connections, creating a special bond and had a significant influence on the participants despite its short duration. This joint effort successfully fosters unity, which aligns with Malaysia's educational reform goals, as indicated by the execution of the flagship project.



Reaching Out Through Arts, Music and Food

Our joint initiatives with The Tuyang Initiative, a Miri based community-led arts management company, emphasized on reaching out to our audience through arts, music and food. Leveraging on personal contacts and the social media platforms, our projects speak out and specifically targeting interest groups in Miri.

MUSIC IN TRADITIONS

The first series of Music in Traditions featured the Muzik Sedaman programme performed by a group from the Kedayan community, the Pertubuhan Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas (PAWE) Sibuti. The event was held at the Coco Cabana, Miri, on February 4, 2023.

The second series portrayed the Jatti Miriek's community traditional dance, the Alai Mullah Haddih was held at Coco Cabana, Miri on July 1. The dance spotlighted on 'kerja kaum' which is closely related to the cultivation of their staple food items, rice.

The dance symbolises the high spirit of collaboration and support among the Jatti Miriek people which aimed to strengthen their traditional economic activities.

The final series for the segment was presented by the group representing three institutions in Miri. The groups were Apong Beranyut, Miri Youth Chamber Music and Bamboo Band Wanita Saban performed at the event which was held at the Bintang Megamall on November 4.

The final series successfully showcased their culture with the core purpose of highlighting the beauty of the community's creative expressions but also sharing their heritage.



CULINARY DEMO AND DIALOGUE

Leveraging on the interest of our social media audience, the first series of Culinary Demo and Dialogue (CCD) showcased popular Melanau delicacies including linut, tumpik and umai which was held on July 15.

It was aimed to bring diverse communities together to learn about different local Melanau's traditional culinary and the influence of their cultures in its cooking.

CCD, also featured the art of "kasam" (fermented food) making technique on August 26, at WAT Academy Miri and has created a unique twist in considering Sarawakian's traditional foods which can be modernised while retaining its originality in flavour, presentation, and experience.

During this enriching one-day event, participants had the unique opportunity to delve into the fascinating world of Sarawak's culinary heritage by learning the intricacies of preparing three well-loved fermented dishes including kasam pucuk ubi (fermented tapioca leaves), kasam sawi pahit (fermented bitter mustard leaves or ensabi), and kasam ikan sultan (fermented sultan fish).

The last series of CDD was called "the Bera Series" that promoted rice-based delicacies such as *pitoh*, *nuba'laya*, *keropok bera*, and *ruti benak* that came from the Kayan and Lun Bawang communities.

The programme was held at the WAT Academy in Miri, on November 11.

LEARNING FROM ELDERLY

"Learning from Our Elders" are a series of workshops teaching our target interest on crafting skills like weaving, beading and fundamental woodworking. The goal is to promote the study, acquisition, mastery and creation of Sarawakian handicrafts.

A basic Weaving Workshop was held on February 5 in Miri bringing the 15 participants to be familiar with the fundamental weaving workshop.



Documenting

Unity Effort of The Past



REGATTA BOOK: ITS HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE IN SARAWAK

The book explores the historical significance of the Regatta in Sarawak, focusing on its pivotal role in fostering social and racial cohesion.

Over the decades, the regatta has become an integral part of Sarawak's cultural fabric, a cherished tradition passed down from generation to generation. It stands as a testament to the enduring commitment of the Sarawakian people towards maintaining peaceful relations

and preserving their shared heritage.

This book also aims to explore deep into the historical archives, conduct interviews with local communities, and collect oral histories to piece together the regatta's transformative journey.

By documenting the stories of those who have been part of this event for years, we hope to shed light on how the regatta has played a crucial role in shaping social bonds

and promoting unity and understanding among our diverse ethnicities. The book also seeks to explore how the regatta continues to be practiced to this day, serving not only as a celebration of the peace treaty but also as a joyful commemoration of Sarawak's rich cultural diversity.

Watch out for the book launch and announcement of its availability for readers.

REGATTA; THE DOCUMENTARY

The 45-minute documentary unfolds the remarkable narrative of the regatta, tracing back from the historic moment of peacemaking in Baram in 1899 to the organising of the annual Sarawak Regatta along the Sarawak River in Kuching.

Through insightful interviews and in-dept research, this documentary engages a diverse array of perspectives from experts, academicians, commentators, boat makers, and rowers contributing their unique insights, shedding light on the multifaceted history, significance and success of the various regattas.

"Regatta: Story of Unity" stands as a testament to the transformative power of this local boat race in fostering unity among the people of Sarawak.

Look out for the documentary's premier screening soon.



Looking Forward

Yayasan Perpaduan Sarawak is all set for its first annual office retreat on January 26–27. At the strategic planning session, selected viable and sustainable unity promotional initiatives for 2024 will be deliberated and approved.

YOUTH OF HOPE, ACTIONS AND RURAL VITALITY THROUGH EMPOWERMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT (Y-HARVEST)

The Y-HARVEST initiative seeks to empower and involve Sarawak's youth to be part of the youth State's transformation and sustainability practices. This initiative will bring together young people, particularly student from local higher institutions to participate in community development activities, workshops, and conversations to help them improve their local knowledge and abilities.

The project is expected to be held for a week in Kampung Pichin, Serian, setting goals to encourage community leadership, teamwork, and conflict resolution among children while also addressing local needs through community service initiatives.

This is also in line with the Post COVID-19 Development Strategy 2030 by the State's government in line to reduce urban and rural development gaps and to achieve economic prosperity, social inclusivity and environmental sustainability.

The week-long programme will involve 20 youths from various institutions of higher learning and is expected to kick off on February 19.



CommUnity (Communicating Unity)

Our newsletter aims to: (i) have open discussions or conversations with a broad spectrum of our society on topics relating to unity and contemporary concerns; (ii) share stories from our community on initiatives they have taken to live harmoniously with and among each other; (iii) provide our readers with the necessary knowledge to be more informed advocates or proponents of unity.



Contact us:

CommUnity is published 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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