Student

UMPSA students uphold traditional Malay dance in Islamabad, Pakistan

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ISLAMABAD, 12 September 2024 – Four students of Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA) were invited to Islamabad, Pakistan, in conjunction with the 67th Independence Day celebration and the Malaysian Food Festival organised by the High Commission of Malaysia in collaboration with the Serena Hotel, Islamabad on 3 to 12 September 2024.

The delegation was led by the former President of the 2022/2023 UMPSA Students' Representative Council (MPP), Agha Khilfi Suarno.

He is also an active activist of UMPSA cultural arts and received the 2022 Mercu Sanjung Award (Culture and Arts).

According to Agha Khilfi, the week of the Malaysian Food Festival began with the launch of Journey of Malaysia: Exploring the Diverse Flavors and Culinary Traditional of Southeast Asia.

"The festival focuses on Malaysia's culinary heritage and cultural diversity, especially the opportunity to enjoy iconic Malaysian dishes such as nasi lemak, roti canai and teh tarik as a celebration of Malaysia's breakfast culture, which is appreciated throughout Southeast Asia and has even been listed as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

"In the programme, we have featured traditional Malay performances from various states in Malaysia.

"The performances that highlight the diversity of the country" heritage and traditions are enchanting," he said.

Also present at the launch were the Serena Hotel Chief Executive Officer, Aziz Boolani and the High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, Ambassador Dato' Azhar Mazlan.

According to the final year student of the Faculty of Mechanical and Automotive Engineering Technology (FTKMA) who was also the recipient of the Golden Bonang Award (Male) of the Cultural Council of the Universities of Malaysia (MAKUM) 2023, Muhammad Irsyaduddin Rosdi, he was grateful to be chosen to participate in the programme in Islamabad.



“This experience is priceless and I am very proud that we not only carry the UMPSA name but also the name of Malaysia.

“We really appreciate the performance we put on.

“Although we are quite nervous to dance in front of the Malaysian Ambassador in Pakistan, we still want to give the best to them for the sake of Malaysia and UMPSA,” he said.

He added that besides performing, they were also taken to visit interesting places around Islamabad.

“I really admire the architecture and sculpture of paintings that tell the history of the country at the Pakistan Monument.

“The position of the monument on the hill allows us to see almost the entire city of Islamabad,” he said.

“We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Islamabad Representative, the Student Affairs and Alumni Department (JHEPA) and the Centre for Sports and Culture (PSK) for inviting, supporting and giving us this golden opportunity.

“We are very grateful for this opportunity; even though there are some constraints on the number of cultural activists involved, the endeavour must go on,” he said.

He also hoped that such a programme could be continued to strengthen the relationship between the university and various external agencies as one of the strategies to empower students, especially in arts.

Also participating were the final year students of the Faculty of Industrial Sciences and Technology (FSTI), Nurul Fatihah Jamal and Siti Aishah Dasney Che Faziman.



According to Nurul Fatihah, they were lucky and grateful for this opportunity.

“For ten days in Pakistan, the embassy looked after us like family.

“The experience of being there makes us feel grateful to be Malaysians, as the saying goes - east, west, home’s the best,” she said.

The festival ended with the Exclusive Coffee Morning programme under the chairmanship of the Women’s Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PERWAKILAN) of Islamabad, To’ Puan Amelia Amani Abdullah.

The programme was held to celebrate Malaysian culture, strengthen friendship, and enhance socio-cultural understanding among diplomatic women, Pakistani and Malaysian women living in Pakistan.

The event ended with the Joget Lambak dance, which all guests celebrated as a symbol of unity and festivity.

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