General

Profesor Turun Padang Programme: Merdeka Scavenger Hunt fosters spirit of love of country and English through gamification

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PEKAN, 18 September 2024 - In conjunction with the initiative of Profesor Turun Padang at Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA), the Centre for Modern Languages (PBM) in collaboration with MELTA Pahang Chapter (MPC) and Persatuan Matahari organised the Merdeka Scavenger Hunt programme held at the Pekan and Gambang campuses on 18 and 19 September 2024.

The programme involved Year 4 to Form 3 school students around Kuantan and Pekan, which aimed to foster the spirit of patriotism and empower the use of English creatively and effectively among students.

Merdeka Scavenger Hunt is a signature programme for MELTA Pahang Chapter, which was founded in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This game was held virtually at that time to inculcate the spirit of independence and, at the same time, to encourage the use of English among the students who participated.

In 2023, the Merdeka Scavenger Hunt was held for the first time at DRB Hicom University and was attended by high school students around Pekan.

The uniqueness of this programme is the various games in one programme that uses English with the theme of independence.

This programme not only aimed to ignite the spirit of patriotism among students but also focused on English proficiency through interesting and interactive activities.

In the spirit of Independence Day, students could appreciate the meaning of independence through gamification based on knowledge of Malaysian history while improving their language skills.

According to the Deputy President of Persatuan Matahari UMPSA, Hazlina Faizal, the Merdeka Scavenger Hunt 2024 programme is an interactive programme that can stimulate students' interest and build self-confidence in the use of English as a second language.

"This play-learning programme is very helpful in ensuring that all participants actively take part in each section of the game," she said.

This programme was also enlivened with an independence celebration activity to raise the spirit of patriotism among the participants, which coincided with the celebration of Malaysia Day on 16 September.

A lecturer from Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology Pahang (TAR UMT), Norherizan Abd Moen, who was also one of the facilitators representing MELTA Pahang Chapter (MPC) in the Merdeka Scavenger Hunt programme at UMPSA Pekan stated that this experience was very meaningful for her.

“The opportunity to interact directly with students from various levels, from Year 4 to Form 3, who are so enthusiastic when participating in this organised activity is very meaningful.

“Through this programme, I can also witness how a creative approach to the use of English is able to help them improve their confidence and communication skills.

“In addition, the spirit of patriotism embodied through team activities makes this experience more effective, not only for students but also for me as a facilitator,” she said.
According to Dr. Ruhil Amal Azmuddin, the mother of a Year 4 student, Isa Amin Riza, who participated in the Merdeka Scavenger Hunt, the activity held through Profesor Turun Padang’s initiative was a good effort to bring professionals, especially at the public university level, closer to the community, especially school students.

“The competencies and abilities available at the university can be shared in a fun and more comprehensive way.

“In addition to having the opportunity to study with university professionals, my son’s participation this time is more meaningful as his school holidays are more beneficial.

“My son gets to meet new friends and try to do fun activities,” she said.

He was happy and hoped that such a programme could be continued in the future.

Overall, Merdeka Scavenger Hunt, through the initiative of Profesor Turun Padang at UMPSA, has succeeded in forming an effective platform for combining the spirit of love for the country with the use of English.

Gamification in English learning has played a very effective role.

This programme not only made learning more interesting, meaningful and effective but also fostered the spirit of patriotism among students.

With a combination of patriotism and interactive language learning, students could improve their English skills in a fun and relevant way and improve their communication skills.

This is in line with the country’s aspiration to produce a more sensitive and competitive generation at the global level.

Salam Malaysia Madani: Jiwa Merdeka.

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