



# UMS committed to researching Bajau culture

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SEMPORNA: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is committed to researching the Bajau Semporna maritime culture that has never been fully regarded as an ethnic group heritage.

Its Vice Chancellor, Prof. Datuk Dr Kamaruzaman Ampon, said in order to realise this commitment, UMS had been implementing various activities such as the installation of "paya o", publication of books as well as participation of the Regatta Lepa for the past few years.

"Our participation in the Regatta Lepa is not just for the competition but more towards the commitment of UMS as a higher learning institution in bringing the culture of the various ethnic groups in Sabah to a higher pedestal," he said.

Apart from that, he said UMS students were also given the opportunity to get closer to the Bajau Semporna community to learn more and better understand their cultural background. Deputy Vice Chancellor, Associate Prof. Datuk Dr Kasim Md Mansur, said UMS' participation in the Regatta Lepa was to also assist in promoting Semporna in the tourism

map besides promoting the richness of the local sculpture art.

Led by Associate Prof. Dr Ismail Ali and assisted by Hinmin Chiam Tah Kong, UMS took third place in this year's Regatta Lepa, the same spot it won last year.

In conjunction with this year's Regatta Lepa, a book entitled "Pulau Mabul: Dulu, Kini dan Masadepan" (*Mabul Island: Then, Now and the Future*) authored by Dr Ismail was launched by Head of State Tun Juhar Mahiruddin.

The book described the early history of Pulau Mabul, its present development and several current issues on the island.

For next year, Dr Ismail said UMS has targeted to launch another book entitled "Cerita Cerita Lisan Komuniti Maritim di Semporna" (Stories of the Semporna Maritime Community).

Towards this end, he said they were grateful for the support from various quarters including Rural and Regional Development Minister, Datuk Shafie Apdal, Minister in the Chief Minister's Department, Datuk Nasir Tun Sakaran, and District Officer, Ibnu AM Baba.