

Declining reading culture a sign of society with less moral values — Masidi

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KOTA KINABALU: Today's declining reading culture in Sabah is a sign of a society with less moral values and artful thinking skills, said Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Masidi Manjun.

The minister, who officiated the Borneo Book Fair 2016 at 1Borneo Hypermall yesterday, believes society has turned its back against a world full of attainable knowledge that is readily within the grasp of everyone.

"Everyone has the capability and talent to learn something new, at any level of age. I hope this is one of the things that we can attain at the Borneo Book Fair, to encourage people to read books on subjects that they have never done before because it stimulates the mind to think. When you stimulate your mind to think daily, I truly believe you can be a better thinker, a better person. Let's inculcate the habit of reading," said Masidi, who is also state education exco.

"I am sometimes saddened to see that each time in front of me are people from universities, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Library. I seldom see the public, who has nothing to do with books, here with us.

"With due respect, unfortunately, I think it's a sign of a society that is declining in moral values, and it is an indication that perhaps the quality of thinkers is not at the level that we hope," he lamented.

Masidi also launched the Tinimungan Tangon Kadazandusun, a book jointly



Masidi (fourth left) launching the two books, Tinimungan Tangon KadazanDusun and Jejak Warisan Borneo, during the Borneo Book Fair 2016 at 1Borneo Hypermall yesterday.

published by Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris and Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), as well as, Jejak Warisan Borneo: Catatan Perjalanan Siri 1, which was published solely by UMS.

"This shows that we are on the right track. What we need to do now is get more quality books, not just books that are inferred from other substances that can attract people to read," he said.

The five-day event, which culminates on October 10, is held in collaboration with the Sabah State Education Department, Sabah State Library, Kota Kinabalu City Hall, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Sabah, Malaysian Consultative Council

for Islamic Organization (MAPIM), Malaysian Book Publisher Association (MABOPA) and National Book Council of Malaysia (MBKM).

Some 68 exhibition booths were provided for 49 exhibitors this year, which involves participants from other states in Malaysia and neighboring countries like Brunei.

UMS (Research and Innovation) deputy vice chancellor Prof Dr Shahril Yusof and Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (Research and Innovation) deputy vice chancellor Dato Dr Noraini Idris were among the distinguished guests at the ceremony.