

# Fostering highly educated human capital through love for books

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KOTA KINABALU: Reading habits and love for books need to be cultivated from childhood to foster highly educated human capital for the nation's development.

Minister of Education and Innovation Datuk Dr. Yusof Yacob said intellectual individuals in a variety of disciplines are imperative in facing the fourth industrial revolution which is part of the ministry's emphasis.

Developing reading culture among children, he said, is the core of quality human capital, in line with the objective of the National Book Policy inaugurated in 1988.

"Through reading, our minds are taught towards advancing our nation therefore let me emphasize that it needs to be inculcated since early childhood," he said during the closing ceremony of the 2018 Borneo Book Fair here yesterday.

The five-day book fair themed 'Membaca, Citra Masyarakat Intellek' saw more than 50 booths set up by universities, government as well as private publishers from Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei.

Organised by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) this year, the annual book fair which has entered its fourth installation will be conducted by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak publishers in Kuching next year.

"I would like to suggest that the organisers consider creating a 'Borneo Book Award' to be the main highlight in the next Borneo Book Fair.

"I am proud that it is organised by Kota Kinabalu and



Jenifer (fourth right) cutting the ribbon to officiate the event and launch the DBP and UMS-published book, witnessed by Normah (third right), Asmiah (far left) and other guests.

Kuching by rotation and I hope this book fair, in addition to Brunei's participation, will also include the region of Kalimantan in the future," said Yusof.

His speech was delivered by Assistant Minister Jenifer Lasimbang.

Jointly collaborating with UMS in this year's Borneo Book Fair were Sabah Education Department, Sabah Library, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP), Sandapak Enterprise and PTS Publication and Distributor.

It was also supported by Malaysian Scholarly Publication Council (MAPIM) and the National Book Council of

Malaysia (MBKM).

Present during the closing ceremony were UMS Director of Research and Innovation Assoc. Prof. Normah Awang Besar, Sabah DBP Director Asmiah Ajamain and UMS Publishers Director Assoc. Prof. Dr. Asmady Idris.

UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk D Kamarudin D Mudin earlier said in his speech that the Borneo Book Fair, which was the brainchild of MAPIM who suggested UMS Publishers to organise the event in Borneo in 2015, was aimed at promoting reading habits in the region.

"With the sales and ex-

hibition of various genres of reading materials, it will provide wider exposure and choices to visitors.

"We hope that it will help promote scholarly books, academic and non-academic books; we are also hopeful that the Borneo Book Fair will contribute to the government's effort in elevating regional relationship between Malaysia, Brunei and Kalimantan as well as those under BIMP-EAGA," he said.

His speech was delivered by Normah.

Also witnessed during the ceremony was the launching of books published by DBP and UMS.