

OUR YOUTHFUL AMBASSADORS



Every year, thousands of youths from Perak are sent overseas, on exchange programmes or invited to participate in international programmes. And many also leave Perak to pursue their tertiary education. Participants of exchange or invitational programmes have to undergo pre-departure preparations which help them to better understand Perak, to equip them with sufficient knowledge about our culture and traditions, about popular tourist spots and things that we associate with Perak. Thus they will be better prepared for their upcoming role as ‘ambassadors’ of Perak.

FOREWORD

Nolee Ashilin Radzi

State Executive Councillor for Tourism, Health and Culture

While the various tourism agencies and players in the industry in Perak are doing their utmost to promote the state as one of the ultimate tourist destinations of Malaysia, many people are still unsure whether our “Discover Perak” campaign is successful or not. Just like what they did with Visit Perak Year (VPY) 2012.

Many fail to understand that it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that “Discover Perak” is a success. And Perak will be a must-visit destination when tourists make a trip to Malaysia. Surely, the state has more than enough world-class attractions that would interest any discerning traveller.

Lest we forget, we have the Royal Belum forest that is older than even the Amazonian jungles and Lenggong Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, just to name a few.

The one factor in the success of “Discover Perak” isn’t the number of gems that we have to offer visitors but the mentality of Perakeans, and the sense of pride that one should have for his or her home state. If we are proud of Perak we definitely want as many people as possible to know about the state that we call home.

There is no denying that whenever we are away from home, we are considered ‘ambassadors’ of the state. This is especially true for the younger generation, especially those who are sent out of the state to pursue their tertiary education, whether within Malaysia or abroad. Their role is great and responsibility, heavy, though they may not realise this yet.

So, why not invest a little time to inculcate the love for Perak in these youngsters before they leave for greener pastures? Word of mouth and recommendations from friends carry a lot more weight than mere advertising.

To make this change in attitude and perception, let us begin now, beginning with ourselves, by instilling a sense of pride for Perak in our children.





Preparation PROGRAMME

Organised by the Ipoh City Council is the *Sister City Exchange Programme* between Ipoh and Fukuoka, Japan, where students here are sent to Fukuoka biennially. Participants are hosted by local families in Fukuoka where they get to share the culture and knowledge of Ipoh with their foster parents.

As part of the preparation for their trip, participants have to undergo traditional dance training classes and are taken on a tour of the city to enable them to brief their Japanese friends and host family in Fukuoka about Ipoh.

Also under the Council's ambit is the *Asian-Pacific Children's Convention Mission Project*, where students in Ipoh are invited to visit Fukuoka.

Selected to participate in the 2002 mission was Faizah binti Zubair. Only 11 years old at that time, and now 22, Faizah remembers learning two traditional dances, with seven other participants, for their cultural performance during the convention. They did not fail to promote Ipoh whenever the chance arose and were a big hit with the curious delegates from Fukuoka and other international cities.

Promoting Tourism Through Culture

Ipoh City Council's very own cultural troupe, *Gema Warisan Budaya MBI*, was invited to perform in Medan, Indonesia and the Philippines last year.

Spending four days in Medan and almost two weeks travelling the Philippines from Manila to Davao, Cebu and Makati, *Gema Warisan Budaya MBI* performed cultural and traditional dances to appreciative audiences.

The programmes, named *Acara Seni Budaya Antarabangsa di Kota Medan, Indonesia* and *Ta Ra Nasa 2012 Tour and Roadshow* in the Philippines, were aimed at promoting Perak and Malaysia as a whole.

International Youth Exchange Programmes

Handled by the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia, is the *Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Programme* (SSEAYP). This annual youth exchange programme is more of a leadership training, whereby the



main objective is to forge mutual understanding among participating countries and Japan, the host-cum-sponsor.

Selection is extremely stringent, and only the best-of-the-best youth leaders from the ten ASEAN countries, plus Japan, are sent on board the cruise ship, which sails in ASEAN and Japan waters for 54 days.

It was a once in-a-lifetime opportunity for Megat Hafizal bin Ahmad, who participated in the 37th SSEAYP back in 2010. As one of the 28 members of the Malaysian contingent, and who was subsequently selected as a Youth Leader of the contingent, Megat Hafizal said that besides going through the programmed activities, it was a golden opportunity for him to promote Malaysia, particularly Perak, where he hails from.

The three Pre-Departure Training camps he attended made him a better person in facing whatever situations he encountered on board. He remembers the hours of training he and his colleagues went through, learning the various Malaysian traditional dances, lessons that stood them in good stead, when they had to perform on "cultural nights".

Megat Hafizal brought with him hundreds of souvenirs to exchange with the other delegates and his host families at the six ports of call. Miniature *labu sayong* from Kuala Kangsar were among the most popular gifts given out.

For more information log on to the Ministry's website at www.kbs.gov.my.

Other International Programmes

Elavarasan Thiruchelvam was in Japan for two weeks in 2011, under the AFS Intercultural Programme. He brought with him souvenirs from Perak and promotional materials obtained from the Ipoh Tourist Information Centre for his host families.

The state education department also organises, some in collaboration with the British Council, international programmes such as the International Inspiration Programme and Young Sports Leader Programme. These are excellent opportunities for the young to promote their home state.



TOURISM ROUND-UP



Vintage Car Club

Perak's vintage car enthusiasts gathered at the Perak Stadium car park on Sunday June 23 to play host to their Kuala Lumpur counterparts, Kelab MG Malaysia, from Kuala Lumpur.

Twelve members of the KL club drove their vintage cars to the Perak Stadium. Passers-by, upon seeing the vintage cars, trickled in for a peek and to take photos.

Chairman of the Perak Vintage Car Club, Yap Kwai Wah, who owns a MG Midget, met with Kelab MG's Organising Chairman, Chew Tee Wong, also a MG Midget owner and exchanged notes.

Yap invited Chew to visit Ipoh and the outcome was the Petaling Jaya-Kuala Lumpur-Ipoh Classic Car Rally that took place that blistering Sunday morning.

Some of the vintage cars on display included a Sunbeam Supreme, a superbly maintained Volvo 122 and a Toyota Celica, to name a few.

After lunch the convoy proceeded to Falim House to view the Tin Mining exhibition and then to Kek Lok Tong Temple before returning to Kuala Lumpur.

A return rally to Kuala Lumpur is in the offing.



Innorace 2013

In conjunction with Ipoh's 25th Anniversary, a competition known as Innorace 2013, jointly organised by Ipoh City Council and the Malaysia Productivity Corporation, was held on Saturday, June 22 beginning at the Ipoh Railway Station.

The objective of the race was to help promote Ipoh's Heritage Trail. A total of 95 teams of four took part.

The winning team won RM1000 in prize money. First and second runner-ups walked away with RM750 and RM500, respectively.

Ipoh Heritage Trail takes visitors on a foot tour of Old Town showcasing some of the splendidly crafted buildings and artefacts left by the British colonial government of yore.



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TOURISM ROUND-UP

June Memorial Services



Every Year in June, Ipoh plays host to veterans from Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom who were part of the Commonwealth Forces that defended Malaya (subsequently Malaysia) from the First World War (1914 to 1918) till the Indonesian Confrontation (1962 to 1966).

The memorial services are spread over a three-day period. They are held at Taiping, Ipoh and Batu Gajah. Each location bears its own significance, characteristics and sentiments.

The first of the memorial services is held at the Kamunting Christian Cemetery where Australian and British soldiers who were killed during the Malayan Emergency (1948 to 1960) lay buried.

The service in Ipoh is held at the cenotaph located in front of Ipoh's Railway Station. It commemorates servicemen who fell during the First and Second World Wars.

At Kem Syed Putra in Tambun, Ipoh, where Gurkha servicemen are interred for their selfless sacrifices during the Malayan Emergency, a separate service is held.

The remembrance service at Batu Gajah's *God's Little Acre* is dedicated to those who were killed during the Emergency.

The Roll of Honour at the entrance to the cemetery includes not only soldiers but policemen, planters, tin miners and civilians. The list is, undoubtedly, a poignant reminder of the impact the Malayan Emergency had on the local populace.

It is delightful to note the presence of the High Commissioners from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Nepal along with our Malaysian representatives at these memorial services.

Equally significant is the presence of veterans, both foreign and local, at these functions. The sad part though is the diminishing number of Commonwealth veterans with each passing year. Mother Nature has a definitive part to play.



TOURISM CALENDAR

July 2013

July 7 to 9 - Tourism Workshop. Venue: Lumut. Jointly organised by MB Inc/IDR and Tourism Perak.

July 18 - Semarak Ramadhan/Pesta Panjut dan Bubur Lambuk. Venue: Ipoh. Organised by Tourism Perak.