

From: Unit Komunikasi Korporat
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CORPORATE COMMUNICATION UNIT
Universiti Utara Malaysia

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"UUM : UNIVERSITI PENGURUSAN TERKEMUKA"
(THE EMINENT MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY)

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UNIVERSITIES SHOULD UPHOLD THE SANCTITY OF OUR NATIONAL LANGUAGE AS THE LANGUAGE OF KNOWLEDGE



UUM ONLINE: 28 February - "It is not a problem if you want to learn and use foreign languages but the Malay language is still the official language of our country and universities play an important role to strengthen and uphold the national language as the language of knowledge," stated Prof. Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan, the Chair of Malay Studies of the Malaysian Government at Beijing Foreign Studies University in his speech during the Adjunct Professorial Lecture, at Seminar Hall A, UUM Convention Center, yesterday.

"We must acknowledge the role of the Malay language which has, up to a time, established itself as the main language of international relations (lingua franca) comparable to Arabic, French and the English language."

"The Arabs came to Malaya as traders and also as missionaries to spread Islam. They used the Malay language and scores of the Malay people converted to Islam because knowledge is more effective when it is delivered in the people's own language," said Prof. Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan. This professorial lecture was jointly organised by the School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy (SLCP) and Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka (Northern Region).

He explained that, Western scholars learned and discovered knowledge in Arabic and they translated all those knowledge into their own language. Even the names of Islamic scholars were translated into English, for example Ibnu Sina was known as Avicenna and Ibnu Rushd was known as Averroes.

He added that, the Malay language belongs to all MyKad holders regardless of your race- Malay, Iban, Kadazan, Indian and Chinese. Nevertheless, from time to time the Malay language was discriminated against by the Malay themselves.

"My neighbors are Indian, Chinese, but when a Malay meets another Malay, they use English. What's wrong with using the Malay language? When you see a Malay man, you address him as "Encik Ahmad" but when you see a Chinese man, you call him "Mr. Lim". Why don't you address him as Encik Lim? This looks trivial but we need to look at the psychological impact of this situation," said Prof. Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan.

Prof. Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan also expressed his gratitude to UUM for appointing him as the Adjunct Professor. He hoped to share ideas and information through the lecture and consultation activities for the common good.

"I was also appointed by the government as a literate envoy in China to develop the language and teach the Malay language including the culture, literature and philosophy," he said.

Meanwhile, the Dean of SLCP, Prof. Dr. Shukri Ahmad described Prof. Datuk Dr. Awang Sariyan as a professional consultant with extensive experience in the Malay language.

"I hope that the inaugural Seminar Menduniakan Penyelidikan Bahasa, Sastra dan Budaya (Seminar on Language Research, Literature and Culture), held in conjunction with this lecture programme, will continue in the future as this effort will intensify our commitment and dedication to disseminate research findings in keeping with the nation aspirations," he said.

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