COMMENTS FROM SARAWAK HERITAGE SOCIETY

By

President

Dato Sri Robert Jacob Ridu

Sarawak has an extraordinary history and a milieu of peoples bringing together a real confluence over the years. This has brought about a unique and gradual fusion of the way of life of our people, which is sometimes called the Sarawakian way. That has made Sarawak a verdant place for good, secure, pleasant and quality living.

Consequently, we have a tangible and intangible heritage which is very wholesome, rich and varied. This heritage is a precious common good, first of all for Sarawakians, but also for visitors and for the entire world. "*My heritage has been my grounding and it has brought me peace*" wrote once Maureen O'Hara.

It is in everyone's interest that Sarawak's heritage be robustly protected and further enhanced by all and sundry and by the State Government.

The State Government must continue to set the tone. Its policies on racial harmony and religious freedom, including our heritage to use the word "Allah" for Christians is very laudable, and sets the framework for a united and evenly growth and development.

In this context, the Sarawak Heritage Society would like to see several matters included in the Policy and Budget Speech at the next session of the State Assembly.

1. To budget funds in the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture for the setting up and operation of a small, competent staffed unit/bureau dedicated to policy formulation and oversight on Heritage (tangible and intangible) regulation and management, and the development and implementation of Programmes. This should not be confused with Museum functions.

2. To set aside, in the development budget, a sizeable annual grant for contribution towards the conservation of varied publicly and privately owned Heritage assets whether tangible or intangible.

3. To draw up financial incentives to assist owners of privately owned heritage assets, tangible and intangible, so as to conserve and maintain their assets for posterity.

Kuching

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