

Adenan: Sarawak must play key role in research

And not remain merely a supplier of raw materials for others



Jena Libang, 27, from Bario, showing off the LitSara essential oil product derived from the fruits and leaves of 'Litsea cubeba' tree at the product launch at SBC near Kuching, yesterday. Photo by Bernama

KUCHING: Sarawak must be a significant partner in research collaborations and cannot remain merely a supplier of raw materials for others to benefit, said Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem.

He said ideally the state should carry out as much critical work as possible in its research agencies based on discoveries made through research on Sarawak’s natural resources.

“We need to value add to this wealth of biodiversity we have, by conserving it, improving our research capacity and collecting as much data as possible with the

intention of generating inventions and innovations,” he said at the launch of the Integrated Biodiversity Research Building at the Sarawak Biodiversity Centre (SBC) here yesterday.

He said over the years, interest in natural products was increasing because of the many benefits that could be derived from them as their qualities were acquired through natural evolution and selection of the fittest traits.

“Natural products are important in research, as a majority of prescription drugs are derived from natural products, for example, the

antibiotics and anti-cancer compounds,” he added.

Adenan also launched a SBC product, “Litsara,” a trademark for an essential oil extracted from the “Litsea cubeba” tree that grows in the hilly forest.

The tree has been utilised over generations by the Bidayuh, Kelabit and Lun Bawang communities for both healing and culinary purposes.

SBC developed the product under its Traditional Knowledge Documentation programme and through the dedicated efforts of the communities that have long utilised the plant. — *Bernama*

French envoy confident about Malaysia's security measures

KUALA LUMPUR: French ambassador to Malaysia Christophe Penot voiced his confidence in the level of security provided by the Malaysian police and the authorities for the foreign community in the country, following the recent attacks carried out by Islamic State (IS) on an entertainment outlet in Puchong.

Penot believed that the Malaysian authorities had taken all the necessary measures to protect not only its citizens but also the foreign community in Malaysia, including the French community of around 3,500.

“I think the level of awareness of threat in Malaysia is very high among the authorities. And I believe that they are doing their best to control the situation.

“It is very difficult though, as there is no such thing as ‘zero risk’ when we speak about extreme violence,” he told *Bernama* in an interview in conjunction with France’s 227th national day celebration today.

Police confirmed that the grenade explosion at the entertainment centre at IOI Boulevard on June 28 was the work of IS militants, the first of such incident in Malaysia. At least eight people were injured in the explosion.

The ambassador also commended Malaysia for calling on the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to convene an emergency meeting of foreign ministers to discuss terror attacks in Islamic countries.

Last Wednesday, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman said the ministry had conveyed the request to the OIC to hold the meeting as soon as possible but had yet to receive any confirmation on the proposed meeting.

The ambassador stressed that the emergency meeting would be an important forum to counter the IS propaganda and ideology, pointing out that IS was very strong in manipulating and reaching out to people through Internet and this was very

difficult to control.

“In this aspect, Malaysia which promotes moderation has an important role to play as one of the Muslim countries outside the Arab world,” Penot said.

However he would like to see more commitment from other Muslim countries as well, in order to work together in addressing the international problem.

On the French national day, celebrated on July 14 every year, Penot expected around 300 guests to attend, including ambassadors and high commissioners, diplomats and Malaysian VIPs.

Some 270 French companies are also expected to be involved in the event, he said.

“It is a very important celebration for us to showcase [French] food, products, and culture and to say ‘thank you’ to all Malaysians who have been working with us for the past years,” he added. — *Bernama*

Appeals Court grants stay on MP's sedition trial

PUTRAJAYA: The sedition trial of Padang Serai member of parliament (MP) N Surendran that had been fixed for next week will not proceed pending disposal of his appeal against a sedition charge.

Surendran, 50, obtained an order from the Court of Appeal here yesterday to stay his sedition trial at the Sessions Court in Kuala Lumpur which was to commence on July 20.

A three-member panel comprising Datuk Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat, Datuk Seri Zakaria Sam and Datuk Zamani A Rahim granted the order after allowing his application for a stay, pending disposal of two appeals relating to his sedition charge at the Court of Appeal.

Surendran, who is also a PKR vice-president and a lawyer by profession, is facing a charge of uttering seditious remarks relating to Datuk

Seri Anwar Ibrahim’s second sodomy case at the Palace of Justice in Putrajaya on Aug 8, 2014.

The remarks were allegedly video-recorded and uploaded on YouTube.

He was charged under Section 4(1)(b) of the Sedition Act 1948, which provides for imprisonment of up to three years or a maximum fine of RM5,000, or both, upon conviction.

The two pending appeals pertained to the High Court’s refusal to refer constitutional questions on his sedition case to the Federal Court, and on the High Court’s dismissal of his application to strike out the charge.

Surendran was represented by lawyers Datuk S Ambiga and Lath-eefa Koya while the prosecution, by deputy public prosecutor Wan Sha-haruddin Wan Ladin. — *Bernama*

Counterterrorism, migration on 11th Asem agenda

ULAANBAATAR (Mongolia): Political developments in Asia and Europe, counterterrorism and migration will be among the topics to be discussed at the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) beginning here tomorrow.

Malaysian Ambassador to China Datuk Zainuddin Yahya, who is concurrently designated to Mongolia, said focus will also be given to other current issues such as human rights, drug trafficking, inter-religious dialogues, transnational crimes and human trafficking.

European and Asian countries have been grappling with issues concerning human trafficking, refugees and violence, especially involving the IS group.

He said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is scheduled to arrive here today afternoon as head of the Malaysian delegation to Asem, will also state Malaysia’s views and stand during the retreat session.

“The Asem senior officials meeting today (yesterday) has also concurred with Malaysia’s request to incorporate the concept of moderation in the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Chair’s Statement,” he said at a briefing for Malaysian media covering the summit, here yesterday.

In recent months, European and Asian countries have been grappling with issues concerning human trafficking, refugees and violence, especially involving the Islamic State (IS) group.

Zainuddin said Asem is an important platform and forum for Malaysia to promote collaborations in politics, economics, commerce and socio-cultural issues among Asian and European countries.

He said Ahmad Zahid had also received requests from Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and Slovenian Prime Minister Miro Cerar for bilateral talks on the sidelines of the summit.

Zainuddin also said that in line with the theme of the summit “20 years of Asem: Partnership for Future through Connectivity”, the

leaders are expected to discuss Asem’s achievements over the past 20 years and its direction ahead.

Ahmad Zahid is expected to participate and forward Malaysia’s views during the First Plenary Session which is titled “Two Decades of Partnership: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead.”

The Second Plenary Session, “Promoting Asem Partnership for Greater Connectivity” will discuss issues concerning building connectivity between Asia and Europe, climate change, sustainable development, water shortage and management, as well as Asem’s framework and future direction.

Asem was formed in March 1996 with the first summit attended by leaders from six Asean nations, China, Japan and South Korea, as well as leaders from the European Union and European Commission.

The first Asem summit was held in Bangkok, Thailand, and the 10th in Milan, Italy in 2014.

The Asem summit is a platform for dialogue and involvement of Asian and European leaders, and is held every two years in European and Asian nations. It is also the highest decision maker in Asem.

Asem’s main activities comprise interactions in three main areas — political dialogues, economic and cultural collaborations. — *Bernama*