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THE ROLE OF THE BIDAYUH CULTURE WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN CULTURAL MILIEU

Patau Rubis

PENDAHULUAN

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THE ROLE OF THE BIDAYUH CULTURE WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN CULTURAL MILIEU

by

Patau Rubis

INTRODUCTION

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BIDAYUH CULTURE AND POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

What is considered as a Bidayuh culture? Is it the way that you and I live or is it the way our grandfathers or great-great grandfathers live? What is our cultural heritage and what are we ourselves preserving now?

Traditionally our culture revolves around hill padi cultivation. Our feasts, songs, dances and interactions previously revolve around this singular important activity. Previously we also live together under the longhouse or kampong system. Previously our leadership pattern is based on personal merits. Today less and less Bidayuh maintain these traditional ways of life.

More and more are accepting western norms either through education and/or religions especially Christianity. More and more accept western and Christian values and tastes. In addition some are assimilated into the Chinese and Malay ways of life especially in the dietary aspects.

What are left with us today?

Bidayuh language or languages

Whether there is a singular Bidayuh language or not, it is yet to be firmly established. It is one of the possible task which DBNA can undertake to establish.

Bidayuh language or languages, or speaking Bidayuh based on whatever dialects you accept as the norm, remain as the only common traits. Even here, more and more Bidayuh, especially those born outside the kampong, do not know how to speak Bidayuh dialects properly. Can we contribute under the present circumstances towards the evolvement of the National Language then? Unlikely.