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Malaysia To Hold UNESCO Day On Friday

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 14 (Bernama) -- For the first time, Malaysia's UNESCO Day will be celebrated this Friday, 50 years after Malaysia became a member of the international organisation.

Education Ministry's secretary-general Datuk Dr Rosli Mohamed said the celebration was aimed at highlighting Malaysia's active involvement and successes in UNESCO.

"The celebration was proposed by Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (who is also Education Minister) on April 12 after chairing the 37th annual general meeting of the Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO (SKUM)," he said in a statement Monday.

"According to the DPM, considering Malaysia as being so active in UNESCO, it is apt to celebrate a day to highlight the nation's successes (in UNESCO) and to honour and award those who have enhanced Malaysia's image," said Rosli, who is also SKUM vice-chairman.

Muhyiddin will open the celebration and launch the Malaysian IPT UNESCO Club at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, here, Friday evening.

"We pick November to hold this celebration because UNESCO was set up by the United Nations on Nov 16, 1946," Rosli said.

"In conjunction with the opening ceremony, we will also fete 20 Malaysians who were recognised by UNESCO in various fields since Malaysia became its member."

The UNESCO Day celebration will also be held at the Central Market here on Saturday from 10am to 6.30pm.

Malaysia (then Malaya) joined UNESCO on June 16, 1958, a year after achieving independence.

Rosli said Malaysia sat on the UNESCO executive board six times and had just completed a three-year term from 2008 to 2011.

The executive board is an important body in UNESCO which discusses issues and implementation strategies of programmes of the organisation, which recently was the focus of attention over the membership of Palestine.

According to Rosli, SKUM was set up in July 1966 to coordinate educational, scientific and cultural programmes among various ministries.

He said six permanent sub-committees, represented by six ministries, were also formed to strengthen Malaysia's participation in UNESCO.

They are the Education Ministry, Higher Education Ministry, Information, Communications and Culture Ministry, Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry, Women, Family and Community Development Ministry, and Foreign Ministry.

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