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Boost for arts sector

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> Govt launches agency with RM20 million allocation for cultural development

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PUTRAJAYA: The government yesterday launched the Cultural Economy Development Agency (Cendana).

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said RM20 million has been allocated to the agency for arts and culture development.

"If you want to build a civilisation, then the core of that civilisation is in its arts and culture. That is the soul of the nation, of the

civilisation and without the soul, what do you get?

"You get high-rise skyscrapers, physical infrastructure, but you don't have the soul.

"So, the arts and culture sector has a strong potential to grow but we have yet to develop it optimally," Najib said when launching Cendana at Perdana Putra.

Cendana was set up by the government through MyCreative Ventures, an initiative announced in Budget 2017.

The agency will focus on championing the development of the arts and culture sector within the creative industry and promote it to a wider group.

Cendana is headed by its chief executive officer Izan Satrina Mohd Sallehuddin, with experienced incumbents from the

performing arts, crafts, music, visual arts, culture, alternative spaces, arts education, heritage, market and literature on its advisory panel.

Izan said the establishment of Cendana augurs well for the arts sector in the country.

She added Cendana will bring about an upheaval of the cultural economy across all fronts, initially in the Klang Valley.

"There are plans to energise the landscape via stimulating demand for the arts, empowering communities by improving circumstances for individual artists and arts groups.

"On a larger scale, we would like to refine existing policies and to make investments in the arts more attractive to corporations," Izan said.



Najib and Izan (right) speaking to guests during the launch of Cendana in Putrajaya yesterday.

