

A Writer's Passion
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WORD POWER...Bernice Narayanan is internationally recognised for her writing. The self-made writer who is also a certified Cordon Bleu chef believes everyone can contribute to society by sharing their ideas and experience. She urges the younger generations to begin writing down their ideas so everyone can read and learn from them
Pic: Hazlinda Hamzah
By Hazlinda Hamzah

KUALA LUMPUR Lumpur, June 20 (Bernama) -- "I have always been in love with nature, the jungle. I have been to many nature reserves in our country. I believe this country has great natural beauty to offer," writer Bernice Narayanan told Bernama here recently.

The exuberant coffee-table book writer enjoys talking about her passion for good writing, cooking, and the environment.

Narayanan, who prefers to be addressed as Bernice, is so friendly and affable, that one begins to feel comfortable with her in the very first meeting.

PASSION

"I enjoy cooking because one can be very creative with it. I took up cooking as a challenge.

It taught me to examine a menu, and discuss with the chef how to add excitement to it, especially when I was tasked with organising gala dinners for company clients," Bernice said.

Bernice' efforts to become an expert chef have reaped rich rewards.

She is a certified Cordon Bleu chef from a renowned network of educational institutions, which imparts superior culinary and hospitality training through its world-class programmes.

"I am adventurous with my food too. I have learnt to choose my dishes just by tasting them. This includes our very own Malay delicatessen, and Japanese dishes," Bernice explained.

GREATEST GIFT

Bernice is internationally recognised for her writing, and believes this is the greatest gift she could possibly receive.

She believes enjoying one's work is critical in helping one survive through tough times.

"When my mum passed away, it was a most depressing moment for me. I loved her so much. She was my greatest fan when I became a cadet writer while waiting for my Form 6 results. She encouraged my writing talent and ability," said Bernice.

Since Bernice was a child, her late mother inculcated regular reading-habits and a love for books in her.

"I was researching a book titled 'The Crescent, the Stars and the Stripes,' during the time of our fifth Prime Minister, Datu Seri (Tun) Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. This was in 2007. The book was to carry a poem for every year of (Malaysia) independence - 50 in that year. I just stopped writing when I lost my mum," Bernice said.

Bernice had already composed 25 poems. However, she found herself unable to write the remaining 25.

RECORD TIME

Bernice slipped into a period of inactivity for a few months. At the end of it, she told herself the time had come to complete her work on the book.

"I drew the line there, and gave myself a deadline. I confined myself to the discipline of delivering as promised. And it was unbelievable! I completed the remaining poems in two hours," she said.

Bernice believes that it was her love for writing that helped her overcome a trying time.

"A coffee table is most conducive for reading, and looking at the delightfully-captured images in books. Such books contain 50 per cent editorial content, while the rest is photographs. I enjoy producing them. This is how I managed to survive the dry-spell in my life as a writer," she explained.

Bernice takes pride in her coffee-table book on the country's fourth premier, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. The book is based on memorable quotes by him.

Another work she is proud of is a pictorial biography of the former Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) president, Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu.

SOUND ADVICE

Bernice said the current generation must learn to be persevering through trying times, not giving up easily.

Even if her path was not always easy and effortless, Bernice persisted until things improved.

"Having faith in God is the answer.

Then you must move on," she said.

"Whatever we want to achieve, we must do it without forgetting to respect others. Learn lessons, and be analytical. No one is spared tough times in life."

"Overcome hard blows to you, confidently. I had wanted to be a writer since I was a child, even if I didn't know what a writer did then," Bernice said with a smile.

She wants younger generations to begin writing down their ideas, so everyone can read and learn from them.

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