

## **Rosmah: Textile symbol of art and heritage**

**TheStarOnline**

**April 18, 2012**

KUALA LUMPUR: The country's traditional textiles should be appreciated as symbols of art steeped in tradition, said Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

"Our traditional textiles are a heritage that has existed for centuries and reflects the unique culture of Malaysians of all races.

"Textiles have played an important role in elevating the culture of our ethnic groups," the wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said before officially launching the National Textile Museum here yesterday,

Museum visitors, she said, would be able to see for themselves traditional textiles such as *tenunan*, *songket* and *batik* at the museum's four galleries.

"The museum is a treasure house which showcases the charm and beauty of our textiles," said Rosmah.

The museum's galleries feature the use of textiles in clothes, shoes and jewellery as well as tools and techniques dating back centuries.

Rosmah encouraged textile entrepreneurs to study the museum artifacts and use them as reference material to create heritage designs of high value.

"I hope they can maintain the characteristics and designs that have been passed down for generations," said Rosmah who hoped the museum would be a source of research for students and academics.

Information, Communications and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim said the 23 museums in the country attracted over 3.1 million visitors last year.

The textile museum, which has been opened since 2010, was visited by over 50,000 people last year and over 8,000 as of April 11 this year.

Rais said the textile industry was booming with total sales increasing from almost RM270mil in 2010 to RM305mil last year.

He said a special unit would be set up to recreate the artifacts in the museum to be sold as souvenir items.

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Source: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/4/18/nation/11127617&sec=nation>