

## **Manuscripts prove greatness of Malay civilisation, says academic**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 11 — The compilation, study and interpretation of Malay manuscripts must be intensified to prove the greatness and ensure the survival of Malay civilisation, said National Professors Council's Head of History, Heritage and Socio-Cultural Cluster, Prof Datuk Zainal Kling.

He said, right now, the Malay community lacked experts who could study old manuscripts as the efforts had been undertaken by study centres and aging experts residing overseas.

“As such, it is important to make the study of Malay manuscripts as our own responsibility at all times, especially at a time when we in Malaysia are still working hard on nation building after 60 years of independence.”

He said this in his keynote address at the 2017 International Conference on Malay Manuscripts held at the National Library of Malaysia (PNM) here yesterday.

The three-day conference, themed ‘Upholding the Malay Heritage, Placing Importance on National Civilisation’ which was also attended by PNM director-general Datuk Nafisah Ahmad, was officiated by Malaysian Historical Society Executive Committee chairman, Tan Sri Omar Mohd Hashim.

Currently, there are over 4,800 Malay manuscripts at the PNM and that 20,000 others were believed to be at various institutions across the globe.

Speaking to Bernama, Zainal said it was only after independence that vigorous attempts were made to study Malay manuscripts by local researchers in an effort to create a Malaysian civilisation.

“Literary, language and cultural studies became more serious when Tun Abdul Razak introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP), National Culture Policy and the

Rukunegara,” he said adding that at that time the NEP gave strong confidence to the Malays.

Zainal also commended PNM for organising the conference which was seen as a powerful and meaningful way towards developing a Malaysian civilisation. — Bernama

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