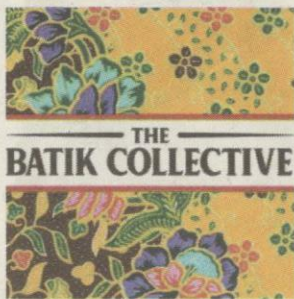


'EDUCATE OUR YOUNG ABOUT BATIK'

They need to know about Malaysia's unique batik craft and identity, says deputy minister

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THE young should be educated on Malaysia's unique batik identity to set it apart from other designs from neighbouring countries.

Deputy Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik said the younger generation from as young as 4-year-olds must be exposed to the intricate qualities of the local batik and be proud of our national heritage.

"We are fortunate to have public figures such as Nurul Izzah Anwar and Hannah Yeoh adorning these amazing local designs.

"However, we must start teaching our young on the beauty of batik crafts, from as early as kindergarten or younger.

"Only then will we be able to develop our batik industry and

promote it internationally.

"We need to be flexible and creative with indigenous designs and motifs.

"Instead of using traditional batik colours, we should explore other options."

He cited American-born designer Amy Blair as an example of a success story that Malaysians should emulate.

Blair is the owner of an online business called Batik Boutique. She founded her shop in 2010, selling batik-themed products such as business card holders, passport holders, throw pillows, scarves and tote bags made by single mothers.

"We must teach the younger generation the art of manufacturing and marketing our batik. Only then can the world enjoy our craft."

He said cultural tourism was four times more lucrative than traditional forms of tourism and stressed on the importance of



Deputy Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik trying his hand at batik painting at the Batik Fest at Malaysia Tourism Centre yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

preserving our local batik designs for cultural and economic reasons.

He said this after launching the Batik Fest event at the Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTiC) yesterday. Present was MaTiC director Rudy Irwan Shukaime.

"We are proud to host this event as it is a great opportunity to give further recognition to Malaysian batik and promote our

traditions to locals and tourists alike," Rudy said.

The third edition of the annual festival, held at MaTiC from yesterday till tomorrow, is open to the public from 10am until 7pm.

The theme of the three-day event is "Batik & Classic".

It's aimed at educating the younger generation on batik culture and to raise awareness on preserving the traditional

art form.

Besides showcasing cultural crafts by the Orang Asli, this year's festival will also feature the "Si Cilik" competition for children below the age of 10, where they get to style and wear batik according to their own creativity as a way of exposing them to the art form.

Visit www.batikfest.com for more information.