

# A taste of Borneo

## Dance competition showcases unique performances from the east

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**M**ORE than 150 people had the chance to witness a traditional Borneo dance competition staged at the Malaysia Tourist Centre (MaTic) recently.

The competition, organised by the Sarawak Heritage Association in conjunction with the Borneo Hornbill Festival 2012, was participated by 12 teams from all around Malaysia.

President Dr Laurence John said the inaugural three-day event was aimed at promoting and preserving Borneo's culture, especially in peninsular Malaysia.

"Malaysians love to see the performances but there is less emphasis on Borneo's culture, heritage and traditional dances here in the peninsula," he said.

"This event featured some of the unique traditional cultural dances as well as other arts and crafts from Sabah and Sarawak," he said.



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The festival started with the Cultural Borneo Beauty Pageant on the first day followed by the Sarawak Beauty Pageant which was held on the second day. The dance was the grand finale that wrapped up the festival.

Dancers from local universities, government agencies and participants from Sabah and Sarawak were dressed in flamboyant costumes and put up their best performance featuring dances from different ethnic groups in Borneo.

Each dance depicted a story about the culture of Borneo and the festivals they celebrate were reflected in the carefully choreographed performance.

"The dance competition exposed teams from peninsular Malaysia to Borneo's culture. The Defence Ministry also sent two teams — Mindef I and Mindef II — to join the event," he said.

Laurence also mentioned that there were a lot of activities done before the festival to promote Borneo's culture and heritage this year.

"We have organised the Spirit of Harvest which is a rice-wine making competition and we collaborated with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) for an architecture competition, Borneo Cultural Design, to come out with the most intricate design for Borneo Cultural village resort," he said.

"The resort, planned to be built in Karak or Bentung in 2014, will feature the winning architecture entry in the competition," he said.

Laurence also said that such efforts to preserve Borneo's cultural heritage need time to set roots in peninsular Malaysia.





**Acrobatic:** The dancers also showed off their agility in their performances.



**All set:** The participants used props and traditional costumes.



**Native style:** The costumes and dance moves all reflected Borneo's culture.





**Colourful display:** The bright costumes helped keep the attention of the audience.

**Working life:** Some of the dances depicted the daily life of the various ethnic groups.









**Good stuff:** One of the troupes dancing in beautiful costumes.

KOBE  
YOKOHAMA  
TOKYO  
TOKYO  
HID  
KYOTO  
NAGOYA  
OKINAWA  
OKINAWA

PERH  
MELBOURNE  
SYDNEY  
GOLD COAST  
TANGAZOHA  
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