

Debates on Society in a Digital World

OVER a three-day period, 80 teams from 20 institutions of higher learning and secondary schools in the country pitted their oratory skills at the Second Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) Debating Championship held at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) campus in Serdang, Selangor. This time, the championship with the topic, Transformation of Society in a Digital World, was conducted in both English and Bahasa Malaysia.

The University of Malaya team, represented by undergraduates Amanda Chan, 23, Vinodhan Kuppusamy, 24, and Raj Shankar, 23, were the winners for the English section, taking home the prize money worth RM2,000 together with the winner's trophy and certificates.

The all-male team from Brickfields Asia College, comprising Wesley Wong, Kelvin Manuel Pillay and Edwin Tan, came in second.

The Serdang Royals Debate Club and Kelab Debat Bahasa Melayu of UPM organised the debate championship with the support of MCMC and the university's Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication.

Serdang Royals Debate Club adviser Dr Moniza Waheed said that the challenges of growing up in today's world are very different from those faced in the past. She added: "For instance, 'fake news', a term unheard of a few years ago, is now a growing concern. MCMC has invested in numerous efforts to safeguard Malaysians online through the Klik dengan

Bijak campaign, a fact-checking app and the sebenarnya.my website.

"It is hoped that the MCMC Debating Championship on Media and Communication will result in a group of analytical youngsters who will make the best out of the use of information communication technologies, both as users and content contributors.

"A young democratic country like Malaysia has much to benefit from these types of citizen participatory endeavours."

MCMC advocacy and outreach division senior director Eneng Faridah Iskandar said: "This programme is one of the best platforms to empower individuals to sharpen their ability to research, analyse issues, think and listen critically, express their thoughts clearly and fluently, and better understand current issues pertaining to communications and multimedia.

"Young people are a major human capital who can drive positive social change for development. Their ideas, energy and vision make them effective change agents. As such, it is imperative they take full advantage of the opportunities provided with the advancement of information communications technology."

Eneng Faridah also stressed the importance of education through MCMC's Klik Dengan Bijak programme, which teaches people to be safe, secure and responsible when online. "We would like to create a sense of responsibility among Internet users to be ethical and sensitive to other users and, in turn, creating a safe online environment."



The winning team representing University of Malaya at the English section of the Debating Championship.