

A large, ornate piece of Songket fabric, featuring intricate gold and silver thread patterns on a dark background, displayed in a museum setting. The fabric is draped and illuminated, highlighting its complex woven design. The patterns include vertical stripes and various geometric and floral motifs. The lighting creates a shimmering effect on the gold threads.

The word songket comes from the Malay word menyongket which means to embroider with gold or silver threads. In actual fact, these interlocking threads are not merely embroidered, but woven to form complex or simple motifs on fine silk or cotton fabric. Songket, once worn exclusively by royalty, is now used for important formal occasions such as royal installations, weddings, circumcision and ear-piercing ceremonies.



DiGi's Amazing Malaysians

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We value the past, as much as we value moving forward into the future. As purveyors of modern technology, DiGi understands and appreciates that what we are today is largely the result of our past. This is the basis of our Corporate Social Responsibility programme, DiGi's Amazing Malaysians, which was launched in early 2005.

DiGi's Amazing Malaysians recognises individuals who are engaged in practices which impact or contribute to natural, cultural, art, built or social heritage, and supports them in programmes which foster interest in youth and children in each particular aspect of heritage. The ultimate goal of the DiGi's Amazing Malaysians programme is to nurture the preservation of Malaysia's heritage by involving these young people who live in mainly rural areas.

In 2005, we worked with five individuals identified as DiGi's Amazing Malaysians and supported them in efforts to educate the youth and children in their communities on their respective areas of interests.

DiGi's **A** amazing
malaysians



Balu Perumal

The Wetlands
Restorer of Perak

Raja Dato' Kamarul
Bahrin Shah

The Traditional
Architect of
Terengganu



Siow Ho Phiew

The Lion Dancer
of Johor



Diana Rose

The Knowledge
Keeper of Sarawak

Romli Mahmud

The Storyteller
of Perlis



Balu Perumal, The Wetlands Restorer of Perak, shared his knowledge and love of the wetlands with the children of Kuala Gula. Together, they created a wetlands garden and resource centre which is today being used by the Co-Curricular Department of the Ministry of Education and other NGOs like the Malaysian Nature Society. In addition to this, there are efforts being made to encourage eco-tourism through the Perak State Tourism Authority and State Wildlife Department.

Raja Dato' Kamarul Bahrin Shah, The Traditional Architect of Terengganu, shared his passion for traditional architecture with youth who witnessed and documented the restoration of an old, dilapidated kampung house. These accounts are to be archived at the state museum. Based on the DiGi model, he hopes to continue this work with other student groups while spearheading efforts to build a Terengganu Heritage Village.

Siow Ho Phiew, The Lion Dancer of Johor, broke new ground when he introduced multi-racial youth to lion dance, drumming and lion head making through the DiGi programme. These youth have since performed at local community events, and 24-drum clubs may soon be formed in the participating schools.

Diana Rose, The Knowledge Keeper of Sarawak, taught children in Tellian, Mukah about Melanau heritage, focusing on dance, music and the weaving of sago fronds. DiGi will continue to support her by collaborating with the state tourism authority to promote Melanau traditions.

Romli Mahmud, The Storyteller of Perlis, has imparted the age-old tradition of Awang Batil story-telling to schoolchildren. In further support of his efforts, DiGi has built a pergola for story-telling just outside his home in Kampung Pokok Sena and will produce brochures on this artform for distribution at state tourism centres.

DiGi's Amazing Malaysians (cont'd)

2006

For 2006, five more individuals have been identified as DiGi's Amazing Malaysians and plans have been made to enable them to share their knowledge and passion for their respective fields of endeavour.

Bishan Singh, The Champion of Pahang's Lake Chini

Lake Chini, Malaysia's second largest freshwater lake, is famed for legends of lost kingdoms and dragons. Lesser known is the five settlements of orang asli who live on its periphery. This community and the lake are threatened by the slow encroachment of development. Through a series of nature camps, Bishan will teach children about the lake's ecosystem and the value it holds for the communities who live on it.

Janet Pillai, Madame "Heritage Heboh" of Penang

Penang, a seaport of great importance during the British occupation of Malaya in the late 18th century, was also the centre of commerce, industry and cultural exchange. As a result, its social history holds immense significance for us. Janet, the tireless crusader for its preservation, will impart to children a sense of Penang's rich history through a combination of dance, music and art.





Eddin Khoo, The Shadow Player of Kelantan

Kelantan, known for its rich cultural heritage such as dikir barat, menorah and makyong, counts wayang kulit as one of its most enduring performing arts. However, this ancient artform faces the threat of extinction as its practitioners are dwindling. Eddin, who had been under the tutelage of famed wayang kulit master, Dalang Abdullah Ibrahim, for ten years before the Dalang died last year, has been working to revive and document this precious artform. Eddin will introduce children to drumming, wayang kulit puppet making and the lively dikir barat.

Rashid Esa, The Woodcraft Warrior of Selangor

On Carey Island, the Mah Meri, a native tribe of seamen, are also known as master carvers of an indigenous wood called batu nyireh which is becoming scarce. There is a great chance that the Mah Meri may cease carving their unique forms once this happens. Rashid has been helping them sustain their artform by creating commercial interest in these carvings and boosting the cultivation of the batu nyireh tree. Rashid will share his knowledge with children by teaching them to replant batu nyireh, carve gargantuan wooden sculptures and perform the Mah Meri dance and music.

Laurence Loh, The Heritage Architect of Kedah

Small towns sometimes have big stories. Lunas in Kedah is such a town. Its history reflects the rise and fall of the rubber industry in Malaysia. Laurence, a Lunas boy, grew up listening to the tale of three pioneering families who made their lives in this town and remains fascinated by the stories which lie waiting to be discovered behind the walls of old buildings. With the help of a group of local children, he will work to unveil Lunas' past and restore a traditional shophouse which has been earmarked as the town museum.