

# Produce more books on local figures, UNIMAS urged

BY HARUN JAU

**KOTA SAMARAHAN:** Senior Minister of Social Development Sarawak, Dato Sri William Mawan anak Ikom hopes Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) will continue its biography writing projects on local prominent figures.

By producing such biographies, he said, UNIMAS is contributing to national unity because when people read such biographies on local figures, they will understand the contributions, sacrifices of the leaders in Sarawak and the challenges they had faced.

Mawan said this when officiating at the launching of a biography on Dato Sri Edmund Langgu Anak Saga entitled *"Dato Sri Edmund Langgu Anak Saga.... seorang pemimpin dan pejuang"* at Unimas here yesterday.

Mawan said if the past events of the state could be recalled, the state of Sarawak had produced a lot of local leaders and in each era such as the Brooke era, Japanese era and also during the era of British rule till the formation of Malaysia, Sarawak has a lot of prominent figures who had emerged from the various communities.

A number of local leaders had found their places in history books in schools. Unfortunately, a large majority of the names of the local leaders had disappeared from memories because their contributions were never written or documented.

This resulted in the struggles and also their contributions being lost from the memory of the people but therefore not appreciated, he said.

"On behalf of the state government, I am very proud and appreciate the effort of UNIMAS

in starting this writing project on local figures in Sarawak.

"I am confident projects such as this will get the support of all quarters in our country. More than that, the biographies that are written can become reference materials for the public," Mawan said.

Mawan said the selection of Dato Sri Edmund Langgu anak Saga for the book was most appropriate.

"He is a local figure who had gone through various eras of rule in Sarawak.

"He was born during the Brooke era, grew up during the Japanese era, obtained education during the British rule and finally involved with the formation of Malaysia and Sarawak politics since 1963."

"Besides being active in politics, he is also a cultural activist as well as having great interest in traditions and customs. He has deep knowledge about traditional norms in Sarawak.

"He is ever willing to share his traditional knowledge with anyone who asked.

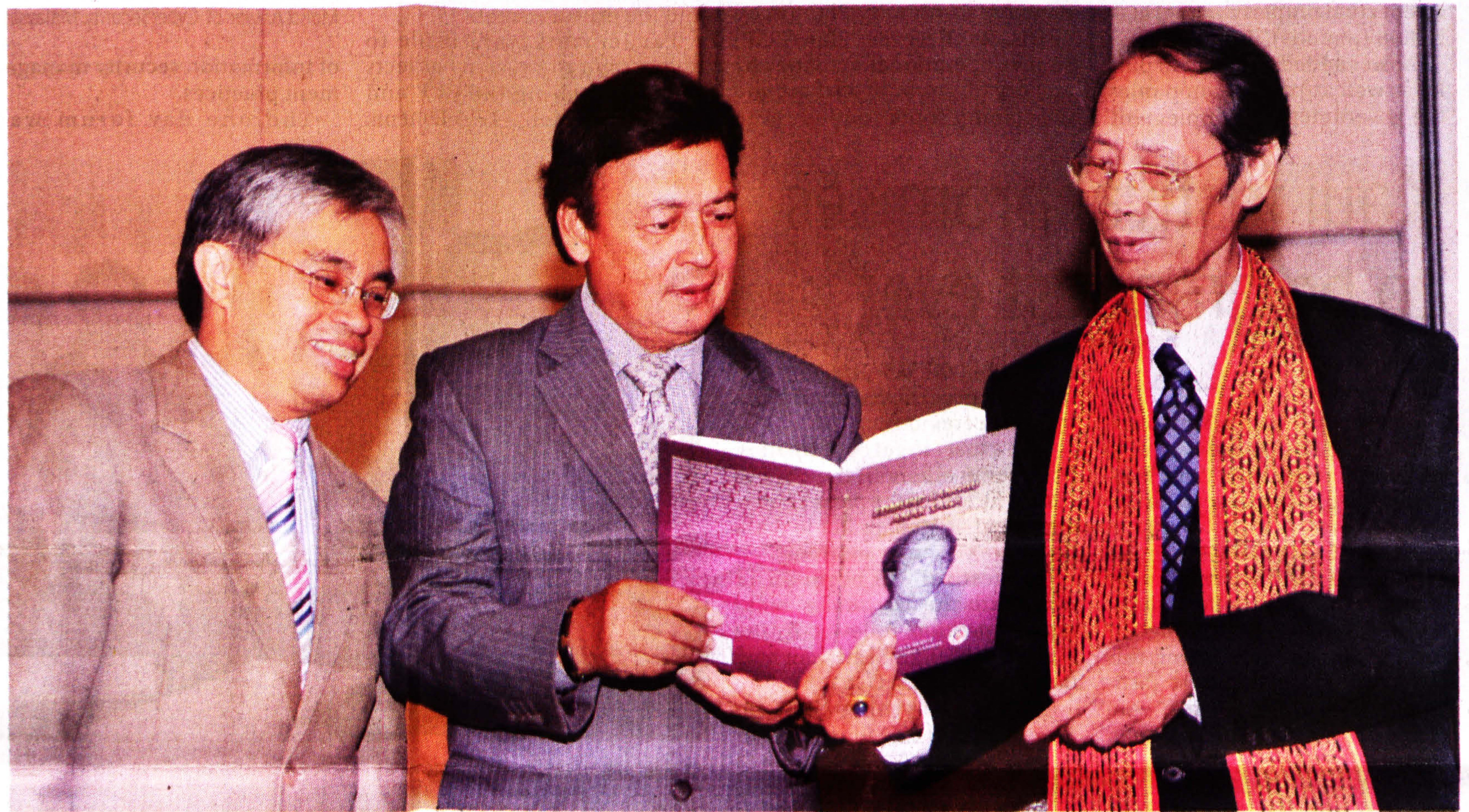
"This has made him outstanding especially among the Iban community in Sarawak," Mawan said.

UNIMAS Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Khairuddin A Hamid in his speech said the biography writing project on local figures was started by UNIMAS in 2010, starting with the biography of Dato' Sri Tra Zehnder.

He said a number of other local figures had also been identified and in the process of being researched and written by UNIMAS' academicians.

"The figures that are selected comprised those who had made big contributions to the country and the community," he said, adding that it was the views of

*"Dato Sri Edmund Langgu is a local figure who had gone through various eras of rule in Sarawak"*



MAWAN (centre), Dr Khairuddin (left) and Edmund (right) browsing through the book after its launching. PHOTO: TH-LU

UNIMAS that the contributions of local figures needed to be documented as reference for the future generations.

Dr Khairuddin said UNIMAS has selected Dato' Sri Edmund Langgu anak Saga as one of the local figures that needed to be put in book because his contribution to the country and community is quite outstanding.

He said Dato' Sri Edmund Langgu was not only a political

leader but also a culture fighter. And several chapters of the book covered his life experience in both aspects.

For instance, he said, in politics, he was a Member of Parliament for several terms and also a member of the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly for two terms.

He was also once a Deputy Agriculture Minister at Federal level and also served as opposition leader in Parliament.

"It is very obvious his political experience is full of various challenges," Dr Khairuddin said.

Meanwhile, Dato' Sri Edmund Langgu, when interviewed told the media he felt very satisfied with the launching of his biography.

He said the biography signified his struggle as a leader since becoming a Member of Parliament in 1963.

The biography on "Dato

Sri Edmund Langgu Anak Saga, a leader and fighter" in Bahasa Malaysia was penned by Neilson Ilan Mersa, the Deputy Dean at the Faculty of Social Sciences Unimas, and Spencer Empading Sanggin, the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, UNIMAS.

The book in hard cover and soft cover is sold at RM37.80 per copy for the softcover and RM58.80 per copy for the hardcover.