

# UNIMAS CONDUCTS FIRST LITERACY PROGRAMME FOR DYSLEXIC CHILDREN

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*Dr Mohammad Ibrahim presenting Rubiah with a memento witnessed by Dr Ong (centre) and others.*

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) in collaboration with the Sarawak Dyslexic Association (SDA) and State Education Department for the first time organised a literacy programme to assist children in mastering basic reading and writing skills in English and Bahasa Malaysia.

Called 'Literacy: The Right to Read for All Children', the programme was organised for Level 1 students age seven to nine who are undergoing Literacy and Numeracy Screening (Linus) programme rehabilitation classes at rural and interior schools in Kuching as well as other divisions in the state.

According to Unimas assistant vice chancellor Assoc Prof Dr Mohammad Ibrahim Safawi Mohammad Zain, the programme will be carried out for a year starting from this month until Nov 2016.

"This programme targets schools in divisions namely Serian, Samarahan, Sri Aman, Betong, Sarikei, Kapit, Sibu, Mukah, Bintulu, Miri and Limbang," he said at the programme's opening ceremony which was officiated by Kota Samarahan MP Rubiah Wang who represented Chief Minister's wife Datin Patinggi Dato Jamilah Anu at SK Pendidikan Khas yesterday.

He pointed out that the programme will be conducted by ten facilitators comprising SDA members and teachers through two camps for English and Bahasa Malaysia.

"The programme will be held for one week at each chosen school where the participants will be staying with the facilitators and taught systematic system, phonics and cumulative attitude as well as using physical materials," he explained.

Meanwhile, Jamilah in her text read by Rubiah said literacy was imperative in ensuring that young children are able to read and write and therefore have the best chance to succeed in their education and everyday life.

“Literacy proficiency must be mastered through formal education in which education plays a crucial role. In Malaysia, the issue of illiteracy among students existed since the early formulation of the country’s education system and became serious in the sixties.

“This is based on the Student Dropout Report, 1972,” she said.

In view of this, various efforts have been carried out by the Ministry of Education to ensure that the skills of reading, writing and counting can be achieved such as through the introduction of the Linus programme.

Also present were SDA president Assoc Prof Dr Ong Puay Hoon and SK Pendidikan Khas headmaster  
Sendal. Roseline