

TALK ON HIGHLAND SALT AT IIC NEXT WEEK

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Langub, seen here taking a photo while conducting research, has been involved in various research projects including a study of the past and present salt trade in the Kelabit-Krayan Highlands.



Salt from the Kelabit-Krayan Highlands which has been processed using traditional methods.

KUCHING: The Malaysian Nature Society Kuching Branch (MNSKB) and Friends of Sarawak Museum (FoSM) will be presenting a talk on 'Highland Salt' at the Islamic Information Centre (IIC) here on Sept 7 at 7.30pm.

According to a press statement, the talk will be conducted by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) Institute of Borneo Studies associate research fellow Jayl Langub who undertook a study of the past and present salt trade in the Kelabit-Krayan Highlands of Central Borneo.

The study was supported by a grant from the Dayak Chair of the Institute of East Asian Studies.

Langub, who has been involved in various research projects including joint ones with foreign scholars, said the talk would discuss the value of salt as a natural resource as well as its historical, cultural and present links to the people of the area.

“Salt, a precious natural resource, has been used as currency and a trade item in various parts of the world including the Highlands.

“The presence of salt water springs, in the Kelabit-Krayan Highlands may come as a surprise but there are over 40 known active salt springs in the area with each producing a unique salt with respect to flavour, colour and use. This necessity has been and continues to be a trade item for the Lun Bawang and Kelabit of Sarawak and the Lundayeh of East Kalimantan,” he explained.

He pointed out that salt was historically valued and continues to be an important trade item.

“It is of great cultural significance to the people of the area as well as provides health benefits. Salt was used to clean wounds and to heal skin infections as well as a beauty product. One salt spring is also believed to bring good luck to individuals who bathe in it.

“Most salt springs are in marshy areas that have vegetation similar to that found in coastal areas. The story of the creation of a great inland sea which is suddenly released and allowed to flow to the sea is supported by geological evidence,” he said.

Langub, who is also a WWF-Malaysia trustee, holds a degree in anthropology from McGill University and a Master’s degree in community development from the University of Alberta in Canada.