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## **UniMAP Helps to Strengthen the Status of Bahasa Melayu in Thailand**

KANGAR, 2 September: Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) is committed in the efforts to help the communities in Phang Nga Province, Thailand to strengthen the use of Bahasa Melayu there.

UniMAP Vice Chancellor Dato' Prof. Dr. Zul Azhar Zahid Jamal said that the Andaman Region Bahasa Melayu Strengthening Programme Phases 1-4 was conceptualised for the sharing of Bahasa Melayu knowledge, involving the sharing of experiences in teaching and learning of Bahasa Melayu in comprehensive methods of knowledge transmission.

“The desire for this programme to take place was expressed by His Royal Highness the UniMAP Chancellor himself after it was suggested by the Malaysian Consulate General's Office in Songkhla with regards to strengthening Bahasa Melayu in six provinces of the Andaman Region in Thailand.

“The UniMAP Centre for International Languages has been given the mandate to identify suitable initiatives to be implemented so this programme could be actualised,” he said at the Andaman Region Bahasa Melayu Strengthening Programme Phases 1-4 closing ceremony.

Also present were Fahad Wittayathan School Advisor Prasert Prasankarn and the director for the UniMAP Centre for International Languages Prof. Dr. Harshita Aini Haroon.

At the ceremony, the Bahasa Melayu learning book entitled *Basic Malay Language (Thai Translation)* was launched. The book will be a syllabus guide for schools involved in the programme.

Dr. Zul Azhar stated that the programme had been executed in four phases in five schools in Phang Nga Province starting December 2015.

“In phases one to three, UniMAP teaching staff visited Thailand to teach in five selected schools, namely Fahad Wittayathan School, Tarbiah Islamiah School, Darissalam Wittaya School, Baan Bosaen School and Sangkhom Wittaya School.

“In the fourth and final phase of the programme, UniMAP hosted a discussion and syllabus sharing session on the teaching of Bahasa Melayu,” he stated.

24 participants consisting of teachers from the Phang Nga Province and five UniMAP language instructors attended the programme that took place for six days and five nights.

During the closing ceremony, UniMAP also donated books and cash for the development of Bahasa Melayu in the Andaman Region of Thailand, as well as to fulfil its responsibility in community service.

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