Of the law and technology

David Thien

KOTA KINABALU: Former sixth Chief Justice of Malaysia Tun Zaki bin Tun Mohamed Arzmi said technology is dictating how the law should be going and getting updated.

He said modern technology like the Internet and smart devices are introducing services like Uber and Grab but the law still lags behind stipulating that such services are illegal as vehicles are not insured for commercial hire business and accident victims are not covered by insurance for compensation in any mishap.

He was giving a keynote address at the 7th International Conference of Law and Society at UMS, on Wednesday. In his address, Chief Justice of Sabah and Sarawak, Tan Sri Richard Malanjum, decried how timid some new lawyers were.

"This is surprising," he said of the expected requirement in the profession, going on to ruminate on our education system, blaming the "spoon-feeding culture" for the malaise going on to blame the "hand-out" mentality of some rural folks expecting free aid from their political leaders, therebyspoiling them instead of helping them to be self-reliant.

To this, Tun Arzmi jested that Malanjum touched on a sensitive topic with the election just weeks away, as Richard explained that from a viral WhatsApp video on how the ancient Greeks classified people into Idiots, Tribes People, and Citiens.

Malanjum ended his address with an Albert Einstein quote on his fear that technology would make idiots out of people in this modern era.

Earlier, both Malanjum and Arzmi teased each other about the introduction of the mobile court system.

"During his leadership, Tun Zaki was a reformer in bringing the court nearer to the people with the introduction of the mobile court system," Malanjum said, among other things.

To which, Zaki replied: "Malanjum gave me too much credit. The mobile court using a bus was my idea. I just spread it around of bringing court justice and services nearer to the people instead of having people to travel from remote areas to attend court services."

"However, mediation my idea introduced in courts (to seek civil cases settlement by negotiation first instead of straight proceeding to lengthy and costly trial for the parties involved)," he said.

UMS picked as conference venue due to social, environ diversity

Shereif Jeffrey

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UNIVERSITI Malaysia Sabah (UMS) was picked as the venue for the three-day 7th International Conference of Law and Society. Wednesday, due to its location and social and environmental diversity.

UMS Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mohd said it is the university's aim to celebrate our "unity in diversity" and to highlight "the best of our diverse people, cultures and practices".

"It is our hope that the conference will serve as the impetus or the push forward of the process of realization of the protection and promotion of diversity and integration," he said. He expressed appreciation to the initiative taken by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and UMS in organizing the conference.

"It sets as a platform to exchange views and experiences among Asian and European nations on the preservation and promotion of diversity in their respective countries."

The three-day conference, themed "Integration and Diversity of Approaches in Law, Humanities and Business Practices", was officiated by Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak Tan Sri Richard Malanjum.

Also present were UMS Chairman of the Board of Directors Tun Dato' Seri Zakri Tun Arzmi; IIUM Rector Prof Dato' Sri Dr Zaleha Kamarudin. The conference was attended by scholars from Indonesia, Turkey and across the country.

Earlier, Dr Kamarudin said diversity is the most wonderful and precious treasure of mankind that evolved from progress and development.

He said from development, identities are created which differ according to nations, ethnic groups, products and services.

He further said this very same diversity creates the uniqueness that makes the world more varied and beautiful.

"Every nation is defined by its own unique and distinctive set of spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional characteristics which has been established and refined throughout the length of their respective histories.

"It is this distinctiveness that crafts the image of the nation and serves as the foundation of the national identity and values to be preserved, safeguarded and promoted."

Meanwhile, Zaleha in her welcoming speech talked about the International Conference on Law and Society started from a humble idea seven years ago.

She also noted how beautiful UMS is, recalling her surprise to see the beauty of the building during her first visit to the university several years back to attend a vice-chancellors meeting.

"You have a very beautiful campus, with a view facing the mountain and the sea, in fact some of the good things we brought back to IIUM... our Royal Banquet is based on UMS's holding room located near its museum."

"Even IIUM's gallery is also based on UMS, there were a few things that we took back and replicate it at IIUM," she said, saying that UMS is certainly an ideal venue to hold the conference.

On a serious note, she said the conference is convened as a platform for scholars to deliberate on current issues in the effort to address issues and challenges faced together.

"It is hoped that the conference will continue to become an intellectual platform for which addresses significant issues beyond borders to the benefit of the community at large," she said.