UMS students put up show-stopping Chinese cultural extravaganza

By MOHD IZHAM B. HASHIM

KOTA KINABALU: Glow-in-the-dark lion dances were the show-stopper at the 7th Tong Hua Festival, thrilling a packed crowd at the Hakka Hall here last Friday in a dazzling night of performances.

It could easily have been a show put up by the numerous Chinese clan and cultural associations around here. But this one is organised by a group of students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah, here.

UMS Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Shahril Yusoff who officiated at the university’s cultural festival said the show put the spotlight on the beauty and unique identity of Chinese culture and help promote better understanding on Chinese heritage and tradition.

"The preservation of cultural traditions is essential so they are not lost and forgotten while ensuring such priceless heritage can be passed on to present and future generations," he told the audience which consisted mostly of university students.

Dr Shahril also extended his praises to the organizing committee for hosting this year’s festival with the theme "Origin" which highlighted the traditions and heritage of Chinese culture, adding that such events also provided good exposure and experience to students involved in the organizing.

It was an exciting night for the audience who left mesmerized by a winning display of talented performances which included traditional Chinese and contemporary dances, drama. The show also featured award-winning guest singer and composer Bell who performed three of her hit songs which topped the music charts in Malaysia.

To up the ante, Dr Shahril also took the opportunity to sing Chinese songs with one of the performers who is a UMS student.

The festival was organised by the UMS Secretariat of Chinese Culture and Art with the aim of promoting better understanding as well as promoting Chinese culture.

Dr Shahril (2nd right) cutting the ribbon together with guests and members of the organising committee to launch Tong Hua Cultural Festival.