

Media Release

Embargoed till 5.00pm, Tuesday, 1 August 2023



BULAN BAHASA 2023 CELEBRATING THE MALAY LANGUAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY

Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (MBMS or Malay Language Council, Singapore) invites the community to celebrate Bulan Bahasa 2023 as it returns with a calendar of mostly in-person programmes, dedicated to fostering an appreciation for the Malay language. Taking place from 13 August to 9 October, this festival will feature various exciting activities, community partnerships, and programmes for the youth.

The official launch ceremony of Bulan Bahasa will be televised over Mediacorp Suria, at 8.30pm on Saturday, 2 September 2023. We invite members of the public to join as guests in the audience for the programme recording session which will take place at Mediacorp, on Friday 11 August 2023. Registrations via <https://go.gov.sg/bb23launchgen> is required by 7 August 2023 for attendance at this recording session, and confirmation of attendance is subject to availability.

“We are grateful that promotion efforts for the Malay language strengthen every year. This can only be achieved through the continuous hard work and support from community partners, schools and teachers. Language promotion is a community effort that requires synergy between different parties integral to ensuring a vibrant environment for our Malay language to flourish, and MBMS thanks everyone for their dedication. I would also like to urge families to participate in these Bulan Bahasa activities, as they are created for everyone to enjoy learning the Malay language everywhere, from outside the classroom and into the homes,” says Mdm Rahayu Mahzam, Chairman of the Bulan Bahasa Committee 2023.

Programmes for the Community

Bulan Bahasa 2023 programmes continue to be organised by various community partners, interest groups and schools, for various age demographics. To celebrate the beauty, richness and diversity of the Malay language, many programmes are organised with a focus on Malay arts, literature and culture. All these partner programmes that engage all five senses are featured in the Bulan Bahasa 2023 calendar of events. These programmes will run in-person and on virtual platforms from 13 August to 9 October 2023.



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Connect with the Malay language through batik painting with **Kamal Arts' Berbunga Batik**. In this workshop, participants will learn about different flowers native to the Malay World, and how to paint them. In explaining their painting in detail, participants will be learning and incorporating the different Malay terms related to colour and tones. Discover the craft of comic writing in **Kamal Arts'** other workshop, **Bengkel Kartun** where participants will learn how to produce engaging and effective comic stories in Malay.

Learn the craft of writing audio drama scripts in **Panggung Digital's Audio Drama Workshop**. In this workshop, students will be trained by M Saffri A Manaf to write effective audio drama scripts. These scripts will be uploaded on The Vector's Club website, a platform developed by TeeVers Pte Ltd for any one aspiring towards voice acting.

Immerse in the art of Malay folklore storytelling through Malay dance, in **Imaginism by Perkumpulan Seni**. In this workshop, youths will be tasked to present the stories and values embedded in Malay folklore, as they explore artistic creativity in their dance moves.

Discover the literary and intellectual richness of *syair* in **Syairpura's Tembang Syair Temasek** workshop and performance. Organised by *syair* activists Afi Hanafi and Anis Qurratu'aini, this programme will entice participants to learn more about the melodious presentation of this treasured Malay literary art form.

Follow **Keat Hong CC MAEC** in a theatre performance showcasing the rich culture of the Malay World on stage. **Jalan Jelajah Jajah** tells the story of a boy's journey and how he was inspired by technology and Artificial Intelligence. Driven to explore innovation and motivated by his teachers to uncover the world of Malay heritage through tech and AI, he attempts to capture various manifestations of the Malay language in his project.

Indulge in the gastronomical delights of Malay cuisine with **Bio Dew Management and Institute's Honey Boleh Masak**. In this workshop, teams in pairs will be given selected ingredients and challenged to produce a dish, after which they will be tasked to explain its creation to the rest of the participants.



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Engage your aural senses and visual imagination in **Lakarkan Bunyian by Elements Pictures**. In this workshop, parents and children will explore interpretations of different types of sounds and effects. Through creative imagination and use of Malay vocabulary, they will be tasked to draw what they hear, and provide an oratorical explanation of their artwork.

For the extended calendar of events for Bulan Bahasa 2023, please visit mbms.sg, [@bulanbahasa](https://www.instagram.com/bulanbahasa) on Instagram and [facebook.com/majlisbahasa](https://www.facebook.com/majlisbahasa).

Telecast of the Official Launch Ceremony and Programme on Suria

During the Official Launch of Bulan Bahasa 2023, we will be presenting the richness of the Malay language through a tapestry of Malay arts. Tune in to Mediacorp Suria at 8.30pm, on Saturday, 2 September 2023 to enjoy performances by our Duta Bahasa Aqmal N and local dikir barat group, Makyong Kedek and Dang Anom. The music arrangements will also be helmed by Duta Bahasa, Megat Firdaus.

Audience can also expect appearances by Anis Qurratu'aini, Afi Hanafi, Suryana Nordin, Puteri Emily and more. This programme will also feature programme partners such as Perkumpulan Seni, Orkestra Sri Temasek, Keat Hong CC MAEC, Tampines Central CC MAEC, Kamal Arts and Rakan Bahasa from Geylang Methodist Primary School and Deyi Secondary School.



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Duta Bahasa (Language Ambassadors) 2023

Duta Bahasa are appointed by MBMS as life-long champions and avid users of the Malay Language. This year, four more ambassadors have been identified based on their expertise in, passion for and affinity to the Malay Language and culture, and their involvement with the community.

1. Afi Hanafi – Malay Art and *Syair* Activist
2. Nursha Ismail – News and Current Affairs Producer-Presenter
3. Ustaz Nuzhan Halim – Mosque Executive Officer, PERGAS Council Member and Educator
4. Syafiqah 'Adha – Musician, Composer and Educator

For more details, please refer to [Annex A](#).

Bulan Bahasa 2023 Creative Identity

This year's Bulan Bahasa's creative identity features beautiful *songket* motifs with familiar icons styled digitally. The vibrant colours of weft metallic yarn that is synonymous with the *songket* fabric is represented in the theme 'Cita. Citra. Cinta. Bahasa Kita.' The vivid purple colour of the creative identity embodies the hope for the language to flourish. Additionally, the pixel art represents the aspiration for everyone to continuously use and discover the language in today's digital age.

Please refer to [Annex B](#) for Bulan Bahasa 2023's creative identity

Bulan Bahasa 2023 Collateral

The creative identity will be featured on select collateral to be produced for Bulan Bahasa 2023. This year, bookmarks and files will be prepared for community partners for distribution to Bulan Bahasa programme participants. The community can also use Whatsapp stickers and Instagram filters to engage family and friends in the virtual space. To obtain the stickers, please WhatsApp the MBMS Secretariat via +65 8575 6244. The Instagram filters can be obtained from @bulanbahasa on Instagram.

Please refer to [Annex C](#) for images of these collateral.



Annex A: Duta Bahasa 2023

Afi Hanafi



Hanafi Idrus, better known by his stage name Afi Hanafi, is known in the community for his passion for Malay literary art, specifically *syair*. As a lover of Malay art and material culture, Afi constantly engages his community in programmes and performances, through which he promotes the Malay language.

Over the years, he has founded several groups such as Orkestra Sri Temasek (a traditional Malay orchestra co-founded with Duta Bahasa Megat Firdaus), Permaisuaru (a Malay choir), and Syairpura (a *Syair* performance group). He has taken the lead in these interest groups, aiming to encourage more young people to appreciate the Malay heritage.

Afi is also a chairman of the Malay Activity Executive Committee (MAEC) at Tampines West Community Centre since 2016, and he uses his community work platform to inspire the community to further appreciate Malay language, literature and arts.

As a Duta Bahasa, Afi aims to promote awareness of Malay literary and material art to the young.

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Nursha Ismail



Nursha Ismail is a news and current affairs producer and presenter at BeritaMediaCorp. Known for producing and hosting current affairs programmes such as ‘Lensa’ and ‘Detik Personaliti’, Nursha has also moderated forum talks, worked as a radio producer and presenter at WARNA 94.2 FM and hosted official national programmes.

Through her work, Nursha has maintained intimate use of the Malay language, as she delves into creating understanding of the community and the Malay World. Recently, she took on a role to promote the kebaya, in support of the multinational nomination to inscribe “Kebaya: Knowledge, Skills, Traditions and Practices” on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Humanity. In her free time, she also regularly conducts pro-bono storytelling sessions with the National Library Board.

As an avid reader and a Duta Bahasa, Nursha hopes to inspire young ones to fall in love with reading, and expressing themselves effectively using the Malay language.

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Ustaz Nuzhan Halim



Ustaz Nuzhan Halim graduated from Cairo's University of Al-Azhar with a Bachelor of Arts Degree, specialising in Quranic Exegesis and its Sciences. He is currently an Executive Officer at Jamiyah Ar-Rabitah Mosque in Dakwah and Youth Development. He is also one of the council members for the Singapore Islamic Scholars & Religious Teachers Association (PERGAS) and

serves as a Naib Kadi recognised by the Registry of Muslim Marriages (ROMM).

On the ground, he developed many learning and community programmes with the aim to create wider awareness and connection to religion and a multi-racial modern context. Through his work, he ensures a close and active relationship with the Muslim community and their development and progress in the country. He also organises talks and programmes focusing on career development and outreach to Muslim families. He remains inquisitive about the relationship between the Malay *adat* (tradition) and *adab* (courtesy) with the practice of religion.

As a Duta Bahasa, Nuzhan hopes to continue harnessing his strong use of the Malay language in his line of service through his interactions and engagements with the community.



Syafiqah Adha



Syafiqah 'Adha Sallehin is a known composer, a traditional Malay music accordionist and an educator who obtained her Bachelor's degree in Music (with Honours) and her Master of Music from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YSTCM) at the National University of Singapore in 2013 and 2016 respectively. She was a recipient of the 'Goh Chok Tong Youth Promise Award' presented by Mendaki in 2010 and the 'Young Inspiring Achiever Award' presented by Berita Harian in 2018.

Although formally trained in the genre of contemporary classical music, Syafiqah is a versatile composer. Her creative aesthetic is a unique voice that stems from her strong training in classical music, and her practice in traditional Malay music. Syafiqah is passionate in using her music composition to raise awareness about her mother tongue and cultural identity.

In 2022, Syafiqah presented 'Mbah dan Rebana' inspired by the poetry of the same name by award-winning Singaporean Malay writer, Hartinah Ahmad. She founded Gendang Akustika, an urban-based Malay traditional music ensemble in Singapore.

As a Duta Bahasa, Syafiqah will continue to bring to attention the beauty of the Malay language and culture through the power of music.

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Annex B

Bulan Bahasa 2023 Creative Identity



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About the Six Icons

Bulan Bahasa's creative identity continues to strongly feature six icons (palari, lion, guitar, mouse deer, pen and rocket) familiar to the Malay community. Symbolising the various aspirations and ideals of the community, the icons complement each other in the celebration of our Malay heritage and culture.

History places Singapore as a significant printing and publishing hub in a regional network of writers and readers. Literature and contributions from our local writers are also an important aspect of the Malay language.

1. *Palari* - A *palari* is a sailing vessel originally built by the *Bugis* in the 20th century. It is a common symbol of trade which represents inter-connectedness within the Malay Archipelago (Nusantara). Likewise, the Malay language is a medium of communication for the people in the region, connecting people across different cultures and locations.
2. Lion - The Malay Annals tell of how Singapore was named by Sang Nila Utama after a lion (*singa*), which is known for its pride, courage and strength. Just like the lion, one should be proud of his or her Malay identity and culture.
3. Mouse Deer - A mouse deer often appears as a protagonist in famous local fables, such as *Sang Kancil dan Buaya* (The Mouse Deer and the Crocodile). Its encounters with various animals, and how it engages with them, reflects its wittiness, adaptability and quick-thinking when faced with challenges. Similarly, one should emulate the mouse deer's wisdom and intellect when faced with difficulties.
4. Guitar - The Nusantara features many musicians who are adept at producing both traditional and contemporary Malay music. Music ignites emotions, and encourages reflections, bonding and relationships. The guitar represents this connection between individuals. Music, like the Malay language, connects and brings people together regardless of their backgrounds.

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5. Pen - The pen symbolises the Malay's literary heritage. The permanence of the ink represents our aspirations for the Malay language to be an everlasting element of our Malay culture and heritage.

6. Rocket - The rocket symbolises change, innovation, and dynamism. It represents our desire to promote the use and awareness of the Malay language, through exciting and innovative ways.

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Annex C

Bulan Bahasa 2023 Collateral

Bulan Bahasa Buses



Bulan Bahasa Bookmarks and File



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About Bulan Bahasa by the Malay Language Council, Singapore

Bulan Bahasa (Malay Language Month) was first launched as a biennial event in 1988 by Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (MBMS or the Malay Language Council, Singapore). Since 2011, it has become an annual celebration that continues to attract community interest, participation and support.

As a signature initiative of the MBMS, Bulan Bahasa is focused on encouraging the community to embrace and use the Malay language in their daily lives. It also aims to instil a deeper appreciation for the Malay culture, and promote the preservation of the community's rich heritage.

For more information about MBMS and Bulan Bahasa, please visit mbms.sg, [@bulanbahasa](https://www.instagram.com/bulanbahasa) on Instagram and [facebook.com/majlisbahasa](https://www.facebook.com/majlisbahasa).