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Civil society organisations play important role in policymaking, says Sabah Sports Minister

By KRISTY INUS



SABAH & SARAWAK

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KOTA KINABALU: The role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in contributing to the policymaking process has been acknowledged as they become an important source of information for both citizens and the government.

Sabah Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Ellron Angin (*pic*) said civil societies had proven their perseverance and contribution in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic that threatened local, national and international health, as well as economic and well-being aspects.

Officiating the 12th International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2022 held here on Wednesday (Dec 7), he said such intellectual discourses are able to guide them in assisting policymakers in planning and executing efficient programmes.

"CSOs play multiple roles ... They monitor government policies and actions and hold the government accountable in its implementation.

"They engage in advocacy and offer alternative policies for the government, private sector and other institutions, as well as deliver services, especially to the poor and underserved groups," he said during the opening of the three-day event.

Ellron said CSOs in Malaysia in particular, have been playing a role in the public policy process for decades, by responding to current issues and providing comments on the policy formulation process.

"The world also witnesses how Malaysian civil societies are active at national, regional, and global levels pertaining to sustainable development.

"Therefore, the theme chosen for this ISTR Asia-Pacific Regional Conference which is 'Active Civil Society: Post-crises Rebuilding, Mobilizing and Innovating' is relevant to what we are currently doing and envisioning for the future.

"We look forward to hearing new ideas and useful suggestions from this conference," he added.

The conference hosted by Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy also saw a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the sidelines between the university and Yayasan Inovasi Malaysia (YIM).

The document inked would be an instrument to strengthen collaborative efforts based on innovation, research, publishing, training and seminars.

It was signed by UMS vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Mansur on behalf of the university and YIM was represented by its chief executive officer Dr Sharmila Mohamed Salleh.

On the conference, Prof Kasim said it was one of the biggest physical conferences hosted by UMS since the opening of the country's border.

A total of 150 participants from around the world have convened to share and deliberate their research findings, in particular civil society's active responses to crises.