Institute does bit to develop Iban language

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Raymond Gai Panting, Teachers Education Institute Malaysia (IPGM) Rajang Campus director

SARIKEI: Teachers Education Institute Malaysia (IPGM) Rajang Campus is doing its bit in the development of the Iban language.

To make Iban a lingua franca, it needs to have a proper spelling system, morphology and syntax, its director, Raymond Gai Panting, said in his keynote address during an Iban language seminar organised by the institute for its staff recently.

It was an undeniable fact that command of the language among its users had yet to reach a satisfactory level whereby it could be considered as an effective or efficient medium of communication, he said.

"There is still a lot to be done to make Iban a lingua franca and I am glad that IPG Rajang Campus is doing its bit towards that end," he reiterated.

Since Iban was introduced as one of the subjects for the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia examination in 2008, IPG Rajang Campus had started to complement the effort by offering a Preparatory Programme Bachelor of Teaching majoring in Iban language this year, he said, adding, SPM students who obtained an impressive result in Iban were encouraged to take up the programme.

Besides IPG Rajang Campus, Universiti Pendidikan Perguruan Sultan Idris (UPSI) also offers the teaching of Iban language, he said.

A total of 38 staff comprising nine lecturers, four from the management section and 25 supporting staff attended the seminar, themed "Dikelala Buah Ari Langgu, dikelala Bansa Ari Jaku".

The seminar facilitators were a curriculum development officer of the Education Ministry, Padang Luna, who dwelled on the spelling system and Iban language structure; IPG Rajang Campus's Iban language lecturer, Corella Stephen (Iban Language structure) and another Iban Language lecturer, Mamat Unggat (Iban grammar).

He believed that all the concerted efforts taken would contribute towards strengthening the command of the Iban language among its users.