Penang fetes its national laureate

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GEORGE TOWN: National laureate Prof Emeritus Muhammad Salleh, who recently turned 70, has been honoured with an exhibition in his home state of Penang to commemorate his life and works.

The famed laureate, who has penned numerous volumes in Malay and English, was feted at the public concourse of the Komtar administrative centre. The event was organised by the Penang Institute in collaboration with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Muhammad was awarded the Asean Literature Prize in 1977 and the Australian Cultural Award in 1975. He was conferred the title of Sasterawan Negara (national literature laureate) in 1991. He is a lecturer at the school of humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, who opened the exhibition, paid tribute to Muhammad, saying that his contribution in producing manuscripts, books and papers on the socio-economic development of the Penang Malays lived up to Muhammad’s own statement that “the writer is the voice of the community.”

The commemoration will culminate with a recital on Saturday by, Goenawan Mohamed, who founded the Tempo magazine in Indonesia. Hasmi Hashim is also expected to perform.