



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL UNITY

PRESS RELEASE

FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES TO STRENGTHEN THE FUTURE OF AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVING

IPOH, PERAK, 8 June – The Ministry of National Unity through National Archives of Malaysia has outlined **four strategic priorities to strengthen the future of audiovisual archiving**. The announcement was made by YB Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang, Minister of National Unity during the opening ceremony of **30th Southeast Asia-Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA) Conference 2026**.

The four strategic priorities to strengthen the future of audiovisual archiving are:

- i. **Accelerating the digitisation of vulnerable audiovisual collections** before deterioration renders preservation impossible;
- ii. **Harnessing Artificial Intelligence responsibly** while maintaining authenticity, transparency, ethical standards and professional oversight;
- iii. **Expanding public access and community participation** through digital platforms, educational programmes and heritage initiatives; and
- iv. **Strengthening regional and international collaboration** through shared expertise, research, standards and technological partnerships.

With the theme “Redefining Audiovisual in Archives: Relevancy, Technology and Unity”, this conference reaffirming Malaysia’s commitment to strengthening regional collaboration and embracing technological innovation in safeguarding the region’s audiovisual heritage for future generations.

In his opening address, Datuk Aaron emphasised that audiovisual archives serve as invaluable repositories of collective memory, cultural identity and historical knowledge, contributing significantly to nation-building, social cohesion and a deeper understanding of shared heritage.

The Minister highlighted the growing importance of digital technologies in ensuring the long-term preservation and accessibility of audiovisual collections. He noted that leading archival institutions around the world have successfully implemented large-scale digitisation initiatives, enabling millions of archival records to be made accessible online to researchers, educators, students and the public.

Datuk Aaron also underscored the vital role of community archives in preserving historical records and cultural memory. He encouraged communities throughout Southeast Asia and the Pacific to actively document and safeguard local histories, traditions, oral testimonies, photographs, recordings and other heritage materials that contribute to broader national and regional narratives.

Addressing emerging technological developments, the Minister highlighted the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in archival management. He noted that AI-powered technologies can assist archivists in identifying content, generating multilingual transcripts, enhancing discoverability and managing large volumes of digital records more efficiently.

He further stressed that cloud-based preservation systems and emerging immersive technologies are creating new opportunities to protect digital heritage while enhancing public engagement with archival collections.

As SEAPAVAA commemorates its 30th anniversary, the Minister reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to supporting regional efforts to preserve audiovisual heritage and advance professional excellence within the archival community.

The 30th SEAPAVAA Conference 2026 brings together audiovisual archivists, heritage professionals, academics and policymakers from across the Asia-Pacific region to discuss emerging challenges, technological advancements and collaborative approaches to preserving audiovisual heritage in the digital era.

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