

Cross-cultural poetry

By SHARIFAH ARFAH
sarfah@nst.com.my

CULTURAL ties between Malaysia and Germany continue to grow in *Tautan* (*Verknüpfungen*), a new anthology of poems in German and Bahasa Malaysia.

Officially unveiled at the recent Malaysian Book Fair, *Tautan* is the sixth book translated by Goethe-Institut Malaysia and Malaysian National Institute of Translation (also known by its Malay acronym ITNM).

It features 100 poems written by Malaysian and German literary writers and poets over the past 50 years.

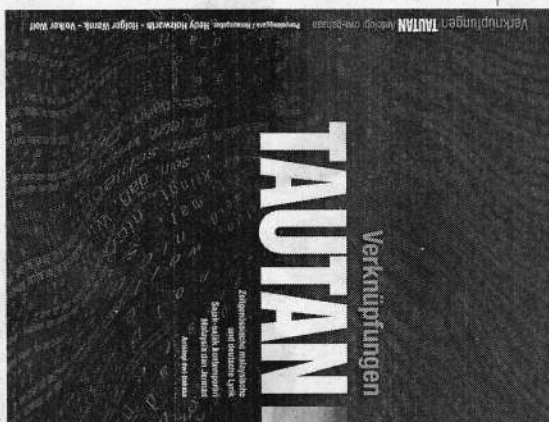
The anthology features the works of familiar names such as Siti Zaimon Ismail, Bernice Chanly, Latiff Mohidin, Associate Professor Lim Swee Tin and National Laureate Professor Emeritus Muhammad Salleh, among others.

Hedy Holzwarth and Holger Warkn from the University of Frankfurt's Southeast Asian Institute led a team of 15 Malaysian and German translators to produce the volume.

The team had previously worked on books such as *Ingin Sebebas Burung* (*Flugversuch*) in 2007; graphic novel *Lat the Kampung Boy* (*Ein Prechtachs aus Malaysia*) in 2008; an anthology of folk tales *Kisah Dongeng dan Cerita Rakyat Malaysia & Jerman* (*Märchen und Volksgeschichten aus Malaysia und Deutschland*) and an anthology of poems *Sajak-sajak daripada Dutaan Barat-Timur* (*Gedichte aus dem West-Ostlichen Distanz*) in 2009.

The training for translators by University of Frankfurt over the last four years has strongly improved their skills and the quality of the translation.

Goethe-Institut Malaysia director Dr Volker Wolf says: "We will cover as many of the literary



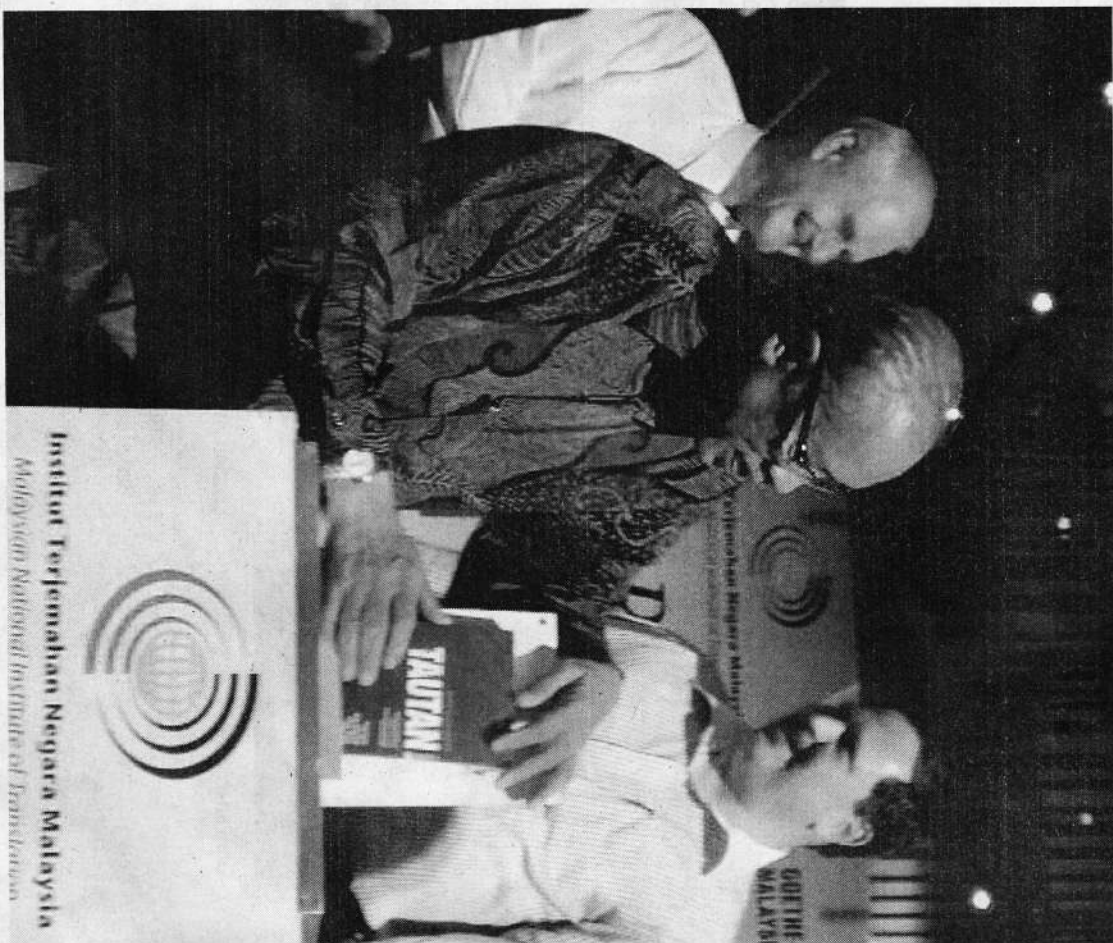
genres as we can.

"Long-term projects need a powerful publisher such as ITNM as well as strong and competent Malaysian and German partners to do the job."

Another bilingual project *Bertin-Kuala Lumpur*, a seventh book comprising a collection of poems, short stories, reports and blog posts is slated for release next year.

Tautan is sold at major bookstores (MPPH and Kinokuniya) or online at <http://ecommerce.itnm.com.my> for RM30.

For details, visit www.itnm.com.my or call 03-2164-2011 (Goethe-Institut Malaysia).



Muhammad Salleh launches *Tautan*. Volker Wolf is on the left