

# SerdangSUN

A Tradition of Giving, a Culture of Bonding

UPM Alumni Magazine

Another Son of Serdang Soil  
*The Money Wizard*



SERDANG LADIES in HISTORY  
giving & making a  
*difference*

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**UPM**  
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA





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# Giving Back... CREATING LEGACY

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It is not just the end of 2009 that looms, but the culmination of another decade, the first of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As such Serdang Sun takes another turning point to pause and review the way we could move forward. Have we reconnected our alumni to Serdang? Or are we not doing enough to catch the attention of those who are detached from us but from time to time they appeared in the prime news and media, featured as champions and giving their contributions to nation building in one way or the other, leaving a legacy.

Though nearing eight decades, UPM is going strong in tracking her alumni who champions their fields and at the same time continue the tradition of giving and exemplary role to community. They are among many who understand the importance of giving back, professionally or through volunteer work and for that they have been honored with

awards of various forms. This Serdang Sun issue considers merging the two areas; their talents and the passion for giving back to the community that could use their knowledge.

Current students (future alumni) have a wide variety of opportunities to become engaged inside and outside the classroom with new ideas, people and experiences. The campus offers myriad opportunities for them to be involved and pursue; old interest and explore new ones. We have learnt that many love the campus so much, that they just want to stay and continue further to the next level of degrees, maybe this time changing research focus and supervisory committee. Serdang Sun allocates a section to feature this. We hope this would persuade more students to capture their impression, thoughts and aspiration in the coming issue

As always our team is engaged, yet another challenge finding time in the busy schedules of the many people who are tasked with other assignments and meeting deadlines. But our mind set is clear, while we juggle the time and making sacrifices, we ensure to deliver great output for this year's issues. Again we thank the great support of the Management of UPM and the understanding our loved ones, for they too contribute to this meaningful art of giving.



# UPM Vice Chancellor New Year Address 2010 - "Uplifting knowledge, Stimulating the economy"

In keeping with tradition, the Vice Chancellor New Year Address 2010 was held on Tuesday 19 January 2010 at *Pusat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah (PKKSSAAS)* Universiti Putra Malaysia. It was well attended by staff of the university, ever eager to hear the success stories, the visions and the new challenges for the upcoming months and year.

In his 60 minutes speech the Vice Chancellor touched on many issues including UPM achievements in 2009. Amongst the academic and research achievements highlights are;

1. an improvement in number of gold medals won at four major international research exhibitions attended by UPM researchers - 16 gold medals out of 25 participations
2. the best graduate school offering MBA in Malaysia, the 3<sup>rd</sup> best in South East Asia, ninth best in Asia and eleventh in the Oceania - Graduate School of Management
3. Islamic Development Bank Prizes for Science and Technology 2009 Award by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC)
4. the first Malaysian scientist awarded with the Halal Scientist Award during the 6<sup>th</sup> Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS) 2009 - Professor Dr Yaakob Che Man
5. three of the four top awards during 8<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Technology Expo (MTE) 2009 - Best of the Best Award, The Very Best Award and Woman Innovator of the Year
6. Minister of Higher Education Malaysia Innovation Award for General Administration Category during the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia Innovation Day 2009
7. Special Jury Award during the National Intellectual Property Day 2009 - Professor Dr Mohd Basyaruddin Abdul Rahman and Professor Dr Yaakob Che Man
8. Special Award from Belgium Ministry of Defence - Professor Ir Dr Norman Mariun and Dr Norhisam Misrun

Not only is UPM at the forefront of academic and research, the students are also creating a name for UPM. Some of their notable achievements are; winner of the Institution of Engineers Malaysian Gold Medal Award; champions of Rakan Muda IPT, Intervarsity Leadership Harmony V and Deputy Prime Minister Malay Language International Oratory Competitions; Inter Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Environment debate champion; champion and third place in L'Oreal Brandstorm; MASUM Hockey League champion; winner of HEI Festival of National Independence Nasyid; MAKUM Dance Festival champion; four gold medals in Malaysian HEI Science and Food Technology Seminar; two gold



medals for Apprentice Chefs during the 6<sup>th</sup> MIHAS 2009; and first place in ASEAN Undergraduate Food Quiz Bowl Competition.

The Vice Chancellor also emphasized the relevancy of the SCORES Model which focuses on shared information and open communication, compelling vision, ongoing learning, relentless focus on customer results, energizing systems and structures, shared power and high involvement. He believes that by applying the model, UPM will become a provider, employer and an investment of choice to the stakeholders.

It is hopeful that through these achievements in creativity and innovations, UPM will be able to contribute in spurring the nation's economy toward a high income economy as envisioned by the Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia. High income economy need high performance society and in UPM context this can be translated as having disciplined people, discipline thought and disciplined action especially people with academic integrity. To achieve high performance institution status, UPM must also develop high prestige talents amongst its human resources through knowledge acquisition, and talent and human resource management through effective and strategic planning.

The Vice Chancellor also reminded everyone of UPM tag line of "A world leader in new tropical agriculture". UPM's new tropical agriculture is focused on high impact agriculture that value-add toward wealth creation and stimulate economic growth towards becoming a high income economy. It also signifies UPM's consciousness towards global issues including global warming and food security. New tropical agriculture is a shift in paradigm from traditional agriculture to high value-add agriculture sector based on four thrust values of **business driven, technology oriented, sustainable development**

**and environmental friendly.** The approaches based on these thrust will include intensifying R&D in agriculture and its related fields, research commercialization, strengthening the agriculture curriculum and its related fields, improving extension services, and expanding professional services and consulting in agriculture. In line with this, UPM has also created a new center of excellence, *Pusat Pengurusan Alam Sekitar* at its UPM Kampus Bintulu, that will address the issues of agriculture and the environment. As



of December 2009, UPM have commercialized 20 R&D products and technologies worth over MYR 28.2 millions, created five spin-off companies for R&D commercialization, and obtained 35 Malaysian patents and 14 overseas patents with 277 Malaysian and 97 overseas patent pending applications. To facilitate commercialization on a global scale, UPM is working with SRI International in USA to promote its R&D products.

Agriculture and agricultural education has always been the niche area of UPM, and today it is further strengthened through the addition of relevant agriculture related fields such as bioscience, biotechnology, veterinary science, halal product, food science and technology and

forestry. For more than seven decades UPM have produced leaders who are directly involved in shaping the nation's agriculture sector or indirectly involved in the nation's economic development.

Currently UPM is in the process of creating the Putra Science Park that will integrate the variety of services, knowledge and expertise for knowledge advancement, increasing commercialization activity, and commercial and entrepreneur development. It is envisioned that the Putra Science Park will enhance the identity and reputation of UPM as a centre of research and learning based on the concept of "knowledge community" that combined the available human resources, expertise, infrastructure, equipments, training and R&D findings in the campus.



Although UPM put a lot of emphasis on research, it has not neglected its core business of producing quality graduates who are competitive and able to contribute to the nation building. To achieve this UPM is embarking on new and improved initiatives such as student-centered learning, enhancing leadership, entrepreneurship, volunteerism, innovation and communication through co-curriculum, and student mobility program which is supported by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Through these innovations and approaches, UPM will be able to contribute to the nation's vision of high income economy.

# SERDANG LADIES in HISTORY

## giving & making a *difference*

• Dr. Rohani Ibrahim (Dip Agri, 1972)

**Women** have made valuable contributions in the development of the country, organizations or disciplines. These women are far from typical among the career women, some are mothers to successful children, playing multiple roles in the office, testing their talents to the limit, and are successful and exemplary to other women. They are the ladies that create history in their own ways.

The *Serdang Sun* symbolically takes off the year, 2010 with a special tribute to the ladies borne from *Serdang*, the ones who pioneered some great work for the organizations, country and making their beloved *Alma mater* feels proud of their achievement. Indeed the editorial team recognises the significant contribution of many other ladies that support the growth of UPM and other organizations, today we choose a few who are instrumental in moving the organization, leading the field with significant impact and with a vision of the future.







**Prof. Datin Paduka  
Dr. Aini Ideris**  
(DVM, 1979)

### **Serdang Own Avian Veterinarian**

Two things are great about Prof. Datin Paduka Dr. Aini Ideris, the well known Malaysian avian veterinarians; her personality and her achievements. She became the first female UPM Alumni to attain professorship in UPM and appointed the Deputy Vice Chancellor of UPM.

Dr. Aini's veterinarian career began as a tutor with UPM in 1979, after graduating with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. Her avian research began in 1981 when she pursued her Masters in Veterinary Science (MVSc) in Avian Medicine, at the University of Liverpool, England. She pursued her PhD degree on a part-time basis shuttling between UPM and University of Queensland, Australia from 1984-1989. Despite heavily involved in teaching and clinical duties at the University Veterinary Teaching Hospital, in 1989 she succeeded and was conferred the PhD by UPM. She underwent her postdoctoral training at the University of California, Davis, USA (1990-1992) and continued her training at Cornell University, USA (1993), when she was awarded the Asian Development Bank Fellowship.

She served her *Alma mater* for 30 years and has held many positions; Acting Head, Department of Veterinary Clinical Studies (1989 & 1990), Chairman of



Veterinary Teaching Hospital (1992-1998), Deputy Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (1992-2001), and Dean of School of Graduate Studies, (2001-2008). She became the Chairman of Malaysian Postgraduate Deans Council for Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions (2005-2008) and became the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic & International), UPM in December 2008. She was conferred as a Fellow of Academy of Science Malaysia and was appointed Chairman of Board of Directors, UPM Holdings Sdn.Bhd.

Professor Aini's avian research and her work on cloning a new heat resistant Newcastle disease virus, V4-UPM, which can be administered both by the conventional methods and incorporated

in the feed led to the commercialization of two poultry vaccines, namely: Newcastle disease vaccine (1995), and tissue culture adapted Fowl Pox Vaccine (1996). With her team, she made a breakthrough in infectious bursal disease vaccine (2005). Obviously

passionate about her work, she continues to give her expertise through advisory and consultancy services to poultry farmers all over the country.

A great educator and mentor to students and young scientists, with more than 30 DVM student projects, and 35 graduate students Master and PhDs. Despite her tight schedule, she still lectures and being consulted for clinical cases and served as external examiner and postgraduate supervisor for Masters and PhD theses of local and overseas universities.

Being tasked to move the Academic & International Division of UPM, Aini envisage strengthening the academic standing of UPM, by ensuring quality education and services that further advance the value of teaching and learning. Close to her heart is internationalization, warranting a high standard and visibility of UPM through broadening and strengthening of linkages and collaboration with renowned universities globally. As UPM alumnus and staff, her unquestionable spirit to aim high and actively give back to the community, is significantly felt. Aini said that success does not come easy; hard work, dedication, positive motivation and tenacity are some of the traits that every academician should possess to strive and fulfil the undertaking as a true academician. She owed her success to the invaluable support of her husband, Dr. Md Ishak Ismail (also UPM alumnus), her five children (four boys & a girl), and also her many mentors.



### Datuk Hajah Rohani Abdul Karim ( Dip Agri, 1979)

#### Passion for Agriculture



It is not easy to juggle a career in politics and devote time to the children she loves, but Datuk Hajah Rohani Abdul Karim, a single mother of three

children and a veteran politician makes a point to spend quality time at home and on vacations together. Though politics was never in her mind she declared candidly, not even during the university



days. The Batang Lupa, Sarawak Member of Parliament only became interested in politics after she joined the civil service. Rohani who holds a Bachelor of Science (Agribusiness) from Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (1979) is the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry and overseeing the agro sector of the country.

Rohani's career began as a Management Analyst with the Malaysian Management, Administration and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), Sarawak branch in her home state in 1980. Later in 1986, she joined the state Agriculture and Community Development Ministry as an Agricultural Economist and two years later, was appointed the Director, Sarawak Women's Bureau, Ministry of Social Development.

During this time, she wrote speeches for the state ministers that triggered her interest in politics. She was already interacting with farmers and learning about their problems then and in the Women's Bureau, she interacted with women from various organisations. Such role has caught her attention - meeting and helping people.

**“This was the beginning, that drives me to go into politics so that I could serve people all the time” she explained.**

Her career began to blossom when she became a member of the ruling party in Sarawak, Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB). Impressed with her leadership abilities and dynamic character, the party leaders decided to field her as a candidate in the 1990 general election and won the Santubong parliamentary seat. She retained the seat in subsequent elections. In 1999, she moved to Kuala Lumpur to become the Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development. In the 2004 and 2008 general election, again she won the Batang Lupa constituency uncontested and on 18 March 2008 she was appointed Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry. A big credit to her and Sarawak came about when she was appointed the Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Agro-based Industry. She recalled not been easy for her in the beginning as she was new to politics, added that she had to survive in a man's world. “In Sarawak, there are not many women political leaders”.

Rohani leads a very busy life. On weekdays, she is mostly in Kuala Lumpur attending to official work at the Ministry and attending to parliamentary sessions. Come Friday, she flies to Kuching, and then travels on road for four hours to get to her constituency of Batang Lupa to fulfill her duties as an MP. She takes it all in her stride because “I enjoy what I do.”

### Dato' Mariam Mas Yaacob ( Dip Agri, 1972)



#### The First Lady to Lead FOA

It was a historic moment for Malaysia's Farmer's Organization Authority (FOA) as for the first time since its establishment in 1973, the organization has appointed Dato' Mariam Mas Yaacob as the first lady Director-General in 36 years. As the 9<sup>th</sup> Director General of FOA, she has thus joined the ranks of Tun Ahmad Sarji (PNB) and Dato' Pahamin Rajab (Air Asia) both of whom have preceded her at FOA.

Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 1952 in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, Mariam Mas Yaacob or Puan Mas, as affectionately addressed by all who knew her then began her career in 1972 with the Department of Agriculture, Kuala Lumpur shortly after completing her Diploma in Agriculture at the College of Agriculture Malaya, Serdang. She left the department to joined Lembaga Pertubuhan Peladang or Farmers Organization Authority (FOA), shortly after its incorporation in 1973 and while there, she took sabbatical leave to pursue her Agribusiness degree in Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (UPM), which is the present Universiti Putra Malaysia.

During the 70s and 80s, her diligence and perseverance in all her tasks has taken her up the promotion ladder where she was entrusted with various responsibilities at the FOA Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. Her charming and engaging personality, continuous credibility and quality work over the years has promoted her to the positions of Principal Asst. Director of Development, Director of Corporate Planning, Director of Entrepreneur Development, Director of Planning and Evaluation and as the Deputy Director-General for





Development in 2006. In March 2009, she created history when she was appointed the new Director General of FOA and also as the first woman, UPM Alumni (Class 72) to ever reach that level.

Dato' Mas's contribution to the farming sector extend beyond local boundaries; when as the Director for Planning and Evaluation, she was Malaysia's National Focal Point (NFP) for the ASEAN-Japan Partnership Program. She is also well-traveled to many countries such as Holland, Germany, Italy, England, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Dubai, India and all ASEAN countries in her working capacity as a senior officer of FOA. She plays an active role in several NGO's and associations notably in PUSPANITA where she held various posts such as Secretary for PUSPANITA of the Ministry of Agriculture and Vice Honorary Secretary for the National PUSPANITA, as Chairman of Peladang Tech, and Board Member of FAMA. She also served as a Spouse Liaison Officer for the CHOGM meetings - in charge of Premier Lee Kuan YEW's spouse (Singapore), as well as Liaison Officer for the G-15 Meeting.

For her long and outstanding service record of 37 years in FOA, she was rewarded with the Awards for Excellent Service in 1993, 1994 and 1998. She also received the *Member of the Order of the Defender of the Realm (Darjah Ahli Mangku Negara)* in 1994 and the *Johan Setia Mahkota (JSM)* award from His Majesty *Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di Pertuan Agong* in October 2009 and recently in February 2010 the *Darjah Indera Mahkota Pahang* from the Sultan of Pahang.

Dato' Mariam Mas is grateful that the Honorable Minister of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry has full confidence in her abilities to lead FOA to greater heights. She prays for God's blessing in her endeavor to serve and develop the farming community in our country. The bubbly lady is happily married to her long time friend and love, Mr. Ismail Muzani Hassan, who is a retired police officer and the couple, is blessed with a son and daughter and two grandchildren.

## Dato Leela Mohd Ali (Msc (TESL), 1991)

### **Transforming People through PENYAYANG**

Leela Mohd Ali, a dedicated TESL teacher for 35 years (1960-1994), also an educator and coordinator of English Language programmes for Technical and Vocational schools and Polytechnics. Her profession was top priority, but during her past time she indulged in Youth and Community work - focusing on teens. In retrospect, Leela said "...it was through my involvement in Youth and Community work that I really developed as a person - being principled, respectful of others and cherishing the diversity of the people of Malaysia; following, leading and managing people; with a whole list of attributes acquired through the voluntary work that I delightedly did".

With such background, it was no surprise when her good friend, the late YABhg. Tun Endon Mahmood, requested that she takes charge of a foundation, soon to be set up, at that time her husband, YABhg. Tun Abdullah Hj. Ahmad Badawi, was the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia in 1999. Very honoured to be entrusted with such an important role, she made sure that she started right - the task of drafting and finalising the Trust Deed with the lawyers. The M & A, holding discussions with Tun Abdullah and their son Dato' Kamaluddin deciding on members of the Board of Trustee and identifying numerous related activities to be addressed the soonest possible.

Over a span of nine years, Yayasan Budi Penyayang Malaysia, also known as PENYAYANG (loving and caring people) has grown from strength to strength. This was supported by an illustrious Board of Trustees and a team of twelve dedicated and committed staff. Penyayang offers care, comfort and consolation to deserving Malaysians. The philosophy is to break barriers and build bridges to unleash the potential among Malaysians, who make contact with the organization, thus turning them to become responsible and productive citizens.



Leela makes sure that PENYAYANG attends to the needy group and responds to requests by talented and resourceful Malaysians needing the extra "push", facilitating their pathways to commendable and exceptional achievements. The assistance comes in the forms of financial or other relevant support that ensure the fulfillment of the beneficiary's need. Currently, PENYAYANG, focuses on programmes in five major areas namely; *Keluarga Bahagia Nadi Kesejahteraan Negara/* the Wholesome Families Pulse of the Nation; Education - Education loans, *Tadika Tuter* - a kindergarten for children with Cochlea implants, Health - *Penyayang Pesakit Kanser/* A cancer support group at the Putrajaya Hospital, Culture and Heritage - Malaysian Batik: Crafted for the World Movement and *Nyonya Kebaya*, Traveling Exhibition and Volunteerism - *Sahabat PENYAYANG/* a volunteer corp and *Kelab PENYAYANG* in local universities.



Through PENYAYANG, Leela aspires to help alleviate suffering and break the barriers to human accomplishment so that Malaysians can realise their dreams. For her, helming PENYAYANG is the fulfillment of her life "I shall endeavor to make people feel good and happy, as it is only through making others happy that one can truly feels happy too".



**Dr. Rohani Ibrahim**  
(Dip Agri, 1972)

### Passing on the Legacy

When Rohani Ibrahim was appointed Director of the Alumni Unit in 1999, her immediate move was to change the name to the Alumni Centre. Her task was to establish alumni relation, create giving programs, trace UPM alumni, publish the Alumni magazine and functions as liaison officer for UPM Alumni Association.

Rohani credited UPM Management and her great mentors, husband Yusoh, brothers, and teacher Mohd Noor Ismail for supporting her giving back to the beloved

2002 bringing along with her UPM Alumni Association to share the building. She made sure the welfare of the Association is not overlooked, by year 2002, she worked on a plan for life membership drive into the Association with UPM Management. Rohani believes that with good governance, the Association will be able to sustain itself and organise various programs for alumni to give back to the *Alma mater*. Clearly she says that "Alumni Association exists because of the *Alma mater*, it does not create alumni - they are the product of the institution. UPM Management continues to support the Association, by February 2010, the Association will have its own office, sharing the block with the UPM Rugby Club. The shared responsibility to uphold the tradition of excellence of UPM shall continue even when the two entities are in separate localities.

Rohani embarked on the alumni tracer study for UPM in 1999. It was first done manually and later using computerized output. By 2005, with adequate resources and a standardized computer system, the tracer study became an important tool to generate data for Graduate Employability, not only to UPM but also to the Ministry of Higher Education.

*Alma mater*. A job taken seriously, diligently and passionately, she definitely works hard to ensure that UPM alumni will be heard, seen and felt by all.

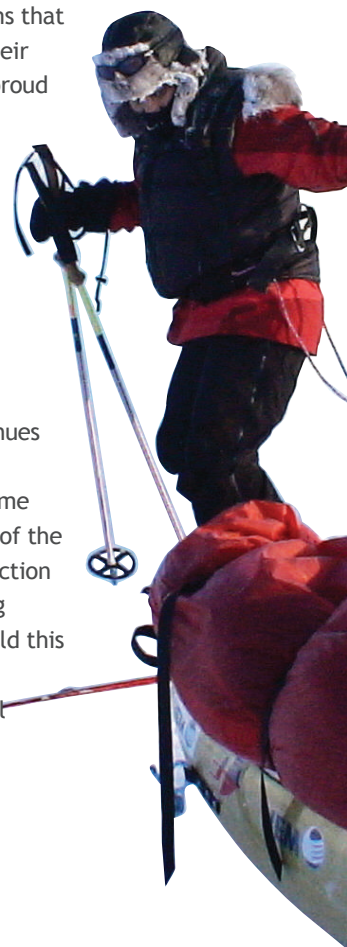
She applies every day the philosophies learned in the classroom and life to move the office and upholds the tradition passed down by the senior alumni presidents of the Association. Alumni relation is about managing people, and she enjoyed every moment amidst being challenged with other responsibilities she had to undertake. Working with alumni taught her that success only comes through having a clear goal and perseverance. Alumni office moved to Block C13, Lorong Pongamia 3, on 3 June

Thought highly of her guru, Mohd Rashid Ahmad, Rohani worked hard to help in the establishment of Yayasan Pak Rashid (YPR) a foundation mooted by alumni. By 17 Nov 2000, YPR was launched by the second Chancellor of UPM, the late TYT Tun Hamdan. She serves as the Secretariat and helps in fund raising, and today YPR is an active foundation holding its YPR Lecture Series annually since 2004, providing financial assistance to needy students, scholarships for the deserving students and short term research grant to young lecturers. Rohani worked hard to brand UPM alumni. By 2003, UPM included a congratulatory note to alumni in the convocation program book and in 2008 requested for the

Management to reinstate the Declaration of Alumni Class by The Vice Chancellor during the Convocation Ceremony. In 2008 too that she sought approval for a historical date, 21 May 1931 to be celebrated as UPM Alumni Day and beginning 2009, it will be celebrated annually.

**Rohani hopes the historical date will bring cohesion, vitality and life to UPM Alumni and campus community and they will continue to return to Serdang.**

Alumni relation is vital in the growth of UPM, she felt there is a need for outstanding professionals to work in alumni, who must be visionaries, also understand the importance of attention to detail. The trend must be for the person to talk and act EVERY DAY like alumni relations is a profession. Rohani sees great things happening with UPM Alumni, but it takes the dedication and passion of those entrusted with the responsibility to work hard, giving their best and demonstrate a high level of responsibility, flexibility and creativity to spearhead programs that benefit alumni and their *Alma mater*. She is proud to have the opportunity to give her talent to her *Alma mater* through the Alumni Centre, Yayasan Pak Rashid and the Alumni Association. She looks forward to contribute in other capacity as she continues on in life. In March 2010, Rohani will assume the post of President of the Malaysian Plant Protection Society (MAPPS) being the first woman to hold this position after all the 32 presidents were all men.





**Datin Paduka  
(Dr) Hajah  
Sharifah Mazlina  
Syed Abdul  
Kadir** (B. Edu.  
Physical, 1990)



### **The ICE Queen**

Datin Paduka (Dr) Hjh Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir is one of the world's most accomplished woman conquerors. She was also a lecturer who specialised in sport psychology. In 2004, with resolute courage and unfaltering determination, she embarked on a perilous expedition and a grueling challenge to become the first female Muslim to ski-sailed 1127 miles from the South Pole to Hercules Inlet of the Antarctica. Mazlina's victory in the Antarctica, gave her the determination to conquer the geographic North Pole, 90 degrees North in 2007.

Mazlina had an outstanding stamina and skill, she chose the potentially dangerous route, North Pole, the trek was no less taxing as it was full of pressure ridges, open water, floating ice bergs, ice cracks, thin ice and that she could fall into deep sleep as she had to be alert to the sounds of polar bear and ice cracking all the time. She was practically walking on skis, pulling a 65-kg sledge which contained

her supplies, with its near vertical ice steps and winding terraces.

Any thought of defeat, doubts and risks were dismissed and her heart held strongly to the prayer to the Almighty Allah. Her conquest made her the first Asian, Malay and Muslim woman to ever reach both poles. The lady explorer admitted that the feat was extremely hard and taken a lot of determination.

UPM is truly proud of her extreme

charisma and bravery. We are confident that the MEPS technique used by her will be able to produce future conquerors of the Ice or the Everest.



**Prof. Dr. Tengku  
Aizan Tengku Abdul  
Hamid**

(Dip Home  
Technology, 1978)

### **Passion for the Ageing Population**

Raised in a Kelantanese noble family, Y.M. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tengku Aizan bt. Tengku Abdul Hamid, is very practical when comes to work. Her primary and secondary educations were in Kota Bharu. Later she entered Universiti Pertanian Malaysia to earn her Diploma of Home Technology (1978). She then left for Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, USA to pursue her baccalaureate (1980) and Masters' (1983) degrees in Family Studies. She returned home in 1983 and joined the Department of Human Development Studies which later became the Faculty of Human Ecology, and lectured in Human Development, Family Studies and Gerontology. She obtained her PhD in 1992 and appointed as an Associate Professor in 2001, currently she is the Director of the Institute of Gerontology since February 2002.

Aizan is the first lady to pioneer the field of Gerontology and led the multidiscipline research institute that has become the reference point for the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Ministry of Health Malaysia and other organisations, on ageing related matters. It was through her expertise and ensuing publicity in this area that she successfully secured RM 5 million research grants between 2002 and 2007 and RM 1.5 million for the 2007-2009 period from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Always enthusiastic when speaking about the field entrusted to her, she lecture and develop curriculum for both undergraduate and graduate courses

in gerontology and family-communication. Her expertise accords her recognition locally and internationally, being invited by universities and government organizations to lecture in demography, population ageing and socioeconomic implications of ageing population. She is also a trainer with the Employees Provident Fund's Training Institute and the United Nations International Institute of Ageing in Malta since 2007. Aizan helps promote the vocational elective course on Basic Gerontology and Geriatric Service with the Ministry of Education since 2005.

**This will help to  
revolutionise the future  
aged care industry in  
Malaysia with trained  
where trained and  
knowledgeable manpower  
is expected to be in  
demand.**

Tengku Aizan's contribution in gerontology goes beyond teaching and research but includes community education project through the Life Long Learning Initiative "University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age" (U3A). The Malaysian Government together with the United Nation Population Fund has jointly funded the efforts which translates the research into community intervention programme and life-long education for the older persons.

This initiative is in line with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 and Malaysia policy on ageing, where active participation of the older persons is encouraged and promoted. The well received project by the target audience expanded to become the U3A programme. Although U3A activities are being held in the suburbs of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, Hulu Langat and Kajang area, it has caught the attentions of those in Penang, Ipoh, Melaka and Port Dickson. Aizan's vision for this programme is for it to expand to other parts of the country and to reach out to a greater span of older generations.



**Dato'** Tajuddin Atan is the Group Managing Director of RHB Capital Berhad since July 2009. His wealth of experience in areas of corporate finance, treasury, risk management and banking operations equipped him well to hold the helm at the RHB Banking Group, which is currently the fourth largest fully integrated financial service group in Malaysia.

## Another Son *of* Serdang Soil *The Money Wizard*

• Associate Prof Dr. Zaitun Yassin (Dip Agri, 1971)



Dato' Tajuddin is a Johorean and was brought up in Kuala Lumpur. He obtained his Bachelor of Science (Agribusiness) from Universiti Pertanian Malaysia in 1983 and a Masters Degree in Business Administration from University of Ohio, USA in 1998, where he was awarded the prestigious Beta Gamma Sigma (MBA) in recognition of high scholastic achievement. He is married to Puan Norsidah Karim and they have three lovely children.

He started his career as an Assistant Accountant at Bank Bumiputra (M) Bhd BBMB), exactly on 4 April 1983, immediately after completing his last paper at UPM on 3 April 1983. He held various positions including an appointment as the Treasurer/Assistant General Manager managing the bank's New York Branch. After completing his overseas stint, he returned to head the FXMM Department where he was subsequently appointed as Treasurer of the bank. His last appointment at the bank was as the Senior Vice President, Treasury Division of the merged banking entities of Bank of Commerce and BBMB.

At the beginning of his career, Dato' Tajuddin already has a target or goal to achieve. He aspires to be an "International Banker". His philosophy was to work hard, to learn new ropes, and to

**"money wizard" has definitely accumulated a vast array of experiences, knowledge and skills of the Malaysian financial market throughout his career in the banking and corporate sectors. His credentials and experience fits the expectation**

continue to acquire new skills and knowledge. His early years were not easy, having to compete with graduates from overseas or from more established local universities. He had to work extra hard to prove to the bosses that he can do it.

Dato Tajuddin admitted that he does active "career mapping". If he has been working too long in one job, he receives signals that he needs to move on. With that desire, he joined the Penang Shipbuilding and Construction Group in March 2000 as the Senior General Manager of Corporate Finance, where he completed the debt restructuring and corporate exercise and submitted a proposal to institutionalize the group to be a world-class organization. From April to June 2001, he was the Group Executive Director of Actacrop Holdings Berhad and subsequently appointed as Managing Director of Chase Perdana Berhad and Advisor to Sitt Tatt Berhad from July 2001 to September 2004. This 'money wizard' again successfully completed the debt restructuring exercise of Chase Perdana and assisted in the acquisition of three semi-conductor companies in Singapore for Sitt Tatt Berhad.

In October 2004, Dato' Tajuddin was hand-picked to be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bank Simpanan Nasional (BSN) and assigned the task of revamping the entire organization. It entails restructuring of the business model. He faced many hurdles as well as resistance from the Union. But he was a "fighter", he successfully led the transformation of BSN into a sustainable, profitable and efficiently governed community bank able to effectively balance its commercial needs with social interests. With the legacy of the new business model he left behind, he is proud to say that today BSN continue to be a profitable organization.

In his previous appointment as the President/Group Managing Director of Bank Pembangunan Malaysia Berhad from December 2007 to July 2009, he was responsible in formulating and establishing the business directions and strategies in the development finance arena. He did a business improvement, improved its operational efficiency and brought about "finesse" to this organization.

This "money wizard" has definitely accumulated a vast array of experiences, knowledge and skills of the Malaysian financial market throughout his career in the banking and corporate sectors. His credentials and experience fits the expectation of the Board of Directors of RHB for Dato' Tajuddin to provide the leadership and continue to move forward RHB business strategies and its transformation initiatives. He is expected to inject fresh ideas and implement ways to conduct the banking business in a more efficient way. One of his main task is to ensure that RHB achieves its aspiration of being one of the top three financial service providers in the ASEAN region by the year 2020.

Now, with the big task to run RHB and with the high expectation of the Board of Directors, what are his comments? According to Dato' Tajuddin, all along he has been a banker. With the accumulation of a lot of experience and hard work, learning, relearning, and retooling over a long period of time, he is prepared to face the challenge. Confidently he said, "I have a 'single-minded' approach. "I want to be a 'Top Banker' whatever it takes and with whatever I need to do". According to him, banking has many disciplines, such as Retail Banking, Corporate and Investment Banking, Islamic Banking and International Banking, so he has to load himself with all the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the status as a "Top Banker". On top of that, he also needs to learn the "trick of the trade" in the banking business.

Dato' Tajuddin wants an opportunity to grow an organization, not just an incremental or arithmetical growth, but also an exponential growth. He admitted that RHB is already well established and a strong entity. His vision is to make RHB a 'great and fantastic' organization. He envisaged RHB to be the 'best' run bank with a clear focus and expansion beyond normal border but still remaining a significant player domestically. He foresees that in the home ground, RHB will grow to be a significant player, strong in all its area of key performing index (KPI), such as Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Assets (ROA). He iterated that "expansion is borderless". During his first six months at RHB, there was a merger and acquisition of PT Bank Mestika Dharma in Indonesia. He hopes to make Indonesia, RHB second home, taking advantage of the size of the population.

Dato' Tajuddin sees many challenges facing the financial sector currently. The banking sector has transformed tremendously from what it used to be. There are now many participants in the new landscape. On top of that the players are becoming very competitive and customers are very demanding. In this respect, he is faced with the challenge to transform RHB to be "Number One" and a significant player in this competitive environment. He has to ensure that the capital being used not only give the desired return, i.e. ROE of double digit (40-60%) and a desired ROA of >1%. He also has the task to make RHB move forward to be an innovative bank, which can adapt to market requirement.

When asked to comment on the development and growth of UPM today, Dato' Tajuddin proudly responded that UPM has gone through rapid transformation and internationalization since its humble beginning as a university in 1971 and he is very proud that UPM is making its presence as a top Malaysian university in the higher education arena, as well as developed a niche as a top Research University. He observes that UPM has become a comprehensive, multidisciplinary institution of higher education. Nevertheless, UPM needs to be known as an expertise in a chosen field, UPM needs to develop a 'niche area'. We need to answer the following questions, "What is UPM known for?" How



"I have a 'single-minded' approach. "I want to be a 'Top Banker' whatever it takes and with whatever I need to do".

do you describe UPM to other people? What is the difference between UPM and other local universities? It is the question of "exclusivity". People will come to UPM and no other university for that particular area or field of study. He hoped UPM will become an APEX university soon. As strength, he says that graduates of UPM are well-rounded and versatile. On the other hand, as an employer, he observed that some graduates lack communication skills. Such skills should be embedded throughout the programme of studies.

Recalling his early years after graduation in 1983, it wasn't fun to be an alumnus of UPM. Most of the bosses were either from UM, UKM or USM. As UPM move forward, many years have passed and the pride and achievement of UPM up to now, is something he is very proud of. He added that many UPM alumni has gone through and improved in their career and have contributed to the people and nation. As an alumnus of UPM, he sees the important role of alumni to strengthen the *Alma mater*. One has the responsibility of giving back to the university and maintaining close ties to the *Alma mater* through various activities organized on and off campus. Therefore, UPM should have programmes or develop approaches and strategies to bring back alumni of UPM to their *Alma mater*. All alumni should look forward to come back to UPM for whatever reasons.



To the students and new graduates, he said, "It is important for one to learn how to communicate effectively and express one's thoughts well". He also wants to remind students that the years as a student are the wonderful years, so they should take time to enjoy. Fresh graduate should also be vocal enough to communicate and identify oneself to be the "chosen one" among the thousands of new graduates. Potential employers would ask such questions as,

"What make you think you will be the chosen one? How do we know you have the extra skills? How do we know you will be an asset to the organization? .....unless you chose to single yourself out and blow your own trumpet ... "Yes, it's me, try me out". Dato' Tajuddin ended and said, "That was what I did."

"It is important for one to learn how to communicate effectively and express one's thoughts well"

"What make you think you will be the chosen one? How do we know you have the extra skills? How do we know you will be an asset to the organization? .....unless you chose to single yourself out and blow your own trumpet ... "Yes, it's me, try me out". Dato' Tajuddin ended and said, "That was what I did."





## Features

• Dr. Rohani Ibrahim  
(Dip Agri 1972; Secretariat of Yayasan Pak Rashid)

# Luc Maene the **World Fertilizer Expert** gives back to UPM

**UPM** bids goodbye to the challenging year 2009 with the very much welcomed lecture by UPM recipient of Doctorate honoris causa in Agriculture who is also an associate alumni of UPM. Annually Yayasan Pak Rashid (YPR) inaugurates its lecture program by inviting renowned speakers to talk on topics relevant to the focus of the university.

A native of Belgium, Luc Maene with a degree in agriculture engineering and soil science in 1970 is just like 'coming home' and getting to see those he knew before he left UPM in the early 80s after spending almost 10 years in the 70s serving as researcher and lecturer in the Department





of Soil Science, Faculty Agriculture, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia. Well known throughout the world for his work on fertilizer and even awarded the Golden Key City of Paris, Luc visited Malaysia for business on a regular basis. UPM indeed was honored when during a conference on fertilizer in Sabah, he accepted to lecture to the fraternity of agriculture comprising of planters, scientists from the local universities and those from the agriculture industry, particularly the plantation sector. His talk was relevant to the subject of green revolution globally, where his presentation on 'Agriculture production: A challenge in difficult times' attracted a crowd of more than 200 people. This was made possible through the support of alumni in the industry along with faculty members and students, which reinforces the facts that there is a growing concern about rising cost to agriculture and food production.

In his lecture, Luc stressed on the impact of changing climate on agriculture production, the utilization forecast and understanding the economic indicators and the influence of global reduction of arable land for agriculture. Luc wants to encourage faculty, students and administration to get out of their comfort zones and expand their notion of disciplines to integrate a greater global vision of agriculture. Alumni and guests were thrilled when he politely attended to questions thrown by the guests.



**At the end of the lecture, Luc concluded that.... "Investment in agriculture must increase, so it can play its role as engine of growth and poverty reduction and acts as a longer-term pillar to fight hunger".**

Dato' Dr. Hj. Mohd Noor Ismail, the Chairman of the lecture cum the Board of Trustee of YPR, confessed that it would be a challenge to those in the Malaysian agriculture fraternity to sustain agriculture and also reminded that raw materials for fertilizer are becoming limited. All boils down to dollar and cents for food production and agriculture and as everyone knows that agriculture is crucial to sustain the economy of a country. After all, food security is vital to the stability of a country.

We hope that YPR Lecture series which has been so auspiciously initiated in 2004 and held annually will hereafter be continued. Our utmost and sincere gratitude to Luc Maene for being the first international guest introduced in this lecture series. He has given his time and means to the subject with a self-sacrificing spirit with the greatest enthusiasm, thoroughly practical, interesting and listened to with marked attention by all. In our praise to him and our mode of appreciation, will no mean rewards him well for he deserves more.

For Luc, it is not the gift or reward, but in the value of giving to the man he once knew Mohd Rashid Ahmad, the then Farm Director of UPM-the agriculture university. It is indeed a discourse that constituted the great element of success. As a secretariat to this lecture, I am happy and eager to bring more of the renowned speaker to the Lecture Series and so far YPR has been able to do well in its lecture series program.





# Unbeatable Spirit

# Conquering Spirit of the Poles

• Dr. Rohani Ibrahim (Dip Agri, 1972)

**Serdang** Sun this year examines the unbeatable spirit of the Ice Queen of Malaysia, *Datin Paduka (Dr) Hjh Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir*. Our proud alumnus is the 15<sup>th</sup> woman in 94 years since the quest of the South Pole (14 Dec 1911) to complete an expedition in Antarctica!



## Made History!

A history was made on **9-30 December 2004**, at Hercules Inlet South Pole when Sharifah Mazlina of Malaysia became the first Muslim in the world and the first Asian woman to ski-sail on unsupported expedition of 1127 km in 22 days, setting new record to conquer the South Pole. Again on **8 - 17 April 2007**, she proof to the world that she could conquer the Arctic North Pole, to ski guided unsupported expedition of 119 km (on GPS) in 9 ½ days from 89 degree to 90 degree N. It was historical triumph for her and the country not because Sharifah Mazlina is a national athlete, but being the first Malay, Muslim and a woman. A significant victory for her, her beloved family, sponsors and the organizations she represents and most of all, for setting example for women in MALAYSIA and beyond.

## The Glory

Before her perilous expedition, she was awarded the Datin Paduka on 23 March 2004 by the Sultan of Johore. Important credentials the Bravery Award from the President of Chile to a non- Chilean in 2004, the Malaysian Book of Record for both conquest Most of all the Antarctica Logistic & Expeditions letter acknowledging her Expedition Record time and Certificate of Achievement as a brave member of the Expedition to the North Pole from Ice Camp BARNEO and Expeditional center POLUS.

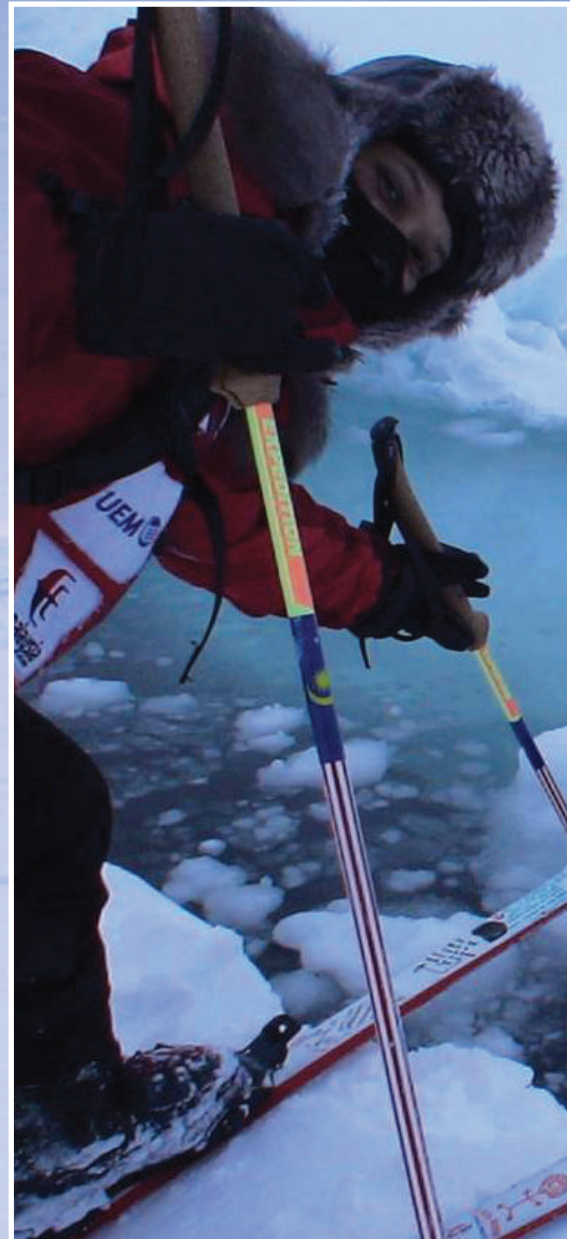
## Pre Expedition Programs:

### The South Pole

The conquests of the North and South Pole were all about responsibility, pride and quest for knowledge. It was just her against the extreme hard icy terrain, and there was no one she had to compete against. If she succeeded and reached the tips, she would be the first woman to ever have done so. It was an exciting and somewhat daunting thought.

Crossing Antarctica on ski sailing, using special parachute - like sails to propel across the barren landscape took shape, Sharifah Mazlina was accepted by the Antarctica Logistic and Expedition (ALE).

She was put to complete a pre- expedition program for her mission to South Pole in Malaysia, Europe and Canada. The three phased pre- expedition programs; the beginners, intermediate and the expert stage lasted 21 days. Each phase, with a distance of 22 kilometer in 5 -7 days to Mount Three Sails Nunatak to complete! Sharifah Mazlina impressive conquest from the arduous tests of endurance of climbing one of the mountains without Crampon and Ice Axe, ski sailing training tests at Hercules Inlet and returning to Base Camp.



She did extremely well and successfully complete the solo journey 50 Nautical and 96 kilometers beyond The Three Sail Nunataks. Congratulatory words "Well Done, Malaysia" from ALE and a letter consenting her , to take the challenge and set a new world record for Muslim and Asian woman now been issued!

### The North Pole

Then again, in 2007 that DSPM undertook another grueling challenge into the Ice, this time 90° North. She commissioned herself to undergo a regimented *pilates* program; a *rehabilitation* program to boost back her physical and mental strength before embarking on the endurance test overseas!



# "a brave lady of the ice"



The training in Malaysia included those in the gymnasium, pulling tyre, and the use of gun, a Magnum .44; she had to carry and be prepared for polar bear. This was followed by a five phase endurance training programs overseas; in Mt Tremblant, Canada (February 2006), Finse Norway (April 2006), Canmore, Canadian Rockies, Canada (July 2006), Scotland (October 2006) and the last phase Oslo, Norway (Dec 2006). Just like South Pole she successfully completed the pre-expedition trek test in Hardangervidda, Norway, in a condition that is similar to the Arctic. Just what she wanted to hear! Confidently they said she could complete the North Pole Expedition in two weeks.

## Journey of a thousand mile begin with a small step

Sharifah Mazlina took her first step of the South Pole Conquest at the South Pole Station on 9 December with a grace *Bismillahirrahmannirahim* and *Selawat* to the Prophet Muhamad. Upon finding the right location she buried the *Time Capsule and the Quran* in a 3 feet deep,

there she recorded on video her brief speech as future documentation before journeyed on her conquest! A challenging and enduring 1127 km trek successfully completed in 22 days, a new record set by her.

The journey to the North Pole began on 8 April 2007 when she landed in Barneo Base Camp. With her Norwegian guide, she ski the treacherous harshest terrain of Arctic. Faced with various dangerous odds at the beginning, even experiencing panic moments. The journey streak with crack iced floor ahead, sloping terrain, moving ice mass, open leads, open waters, thin ice extreme pressure ridges, and strong headwinds were hazardously dangerous; a condition she endured in order to accomplish the mission set for!

## The Final mile...Antarctica

Sharifah Mazlina's schedule out of Antarctica was 4 January 2005, with the deadline of only 30 days to complete the expedition, the latest being 18 January. After ski sailing 20 days,



she felt confident to maneuver her movement, picking new skills collecting snow and jumping over low sastrugies and stood up easily from the fall while sailing. She accomplished her longest mile 134 km in 11 hours. She had another 82 km, to reach the end, then her mission completed. The MEPS concept, the psychology and that little whisper "*a little bit more*" helped her face the challenges. She was briefed about the possible challenge of no wind situation ahead at DCH6, a location where Twin Otter Plane DCH6 crashed.



This time she reached Hercules Inlet and joyfully screamed **"Hercules Inlet Here I Come!!! Alhamdulillah, Praise to Allah and put up the Malaysian Flag"**! A triumph earned not only by Datin Paduka (Dr) Hj Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir, but Malaysia, Asia, the Muslim World and most of all celebrated by women.

On the 21st day, the movement was limited and she faced the difficulty to raise the sail as there was no wind. Visualizing Base Camp ahead burned her spirit, slowly but surely she inched forward. The slow and sluggish move put a strain on her shoulder and legs, made her shifted the strength to the waist to pull the sledge. The situation was too challenging and tiring final mile, accomplishing only 20 km for that day, so she stopped to rest. The 22nd day of the expedition kicked off with a different spirit, hope and imagination for the finishing line would only be 27 km away. At this last mile, Sharifah Mazlina was to lookout for two hills appearing like two dinosaurs also to mean that she had reach Hercules Inlet. Though faced with no winds, this time no more complaint... she moved on anxiously reading her GPS despite attaining the latest reading....like an anxious child she kept watching the GPS. She jumped and put up the biggest sail when there was strong wind to pull her to the end ....there sighted in front of her the two hills; the two Dinosaurs hills. This time she reached Hercules Inlet and joyfully screamed **"Hercules Inlet Here I Come!!!"**

**Alhamdulillah, Praise to Allah and put up the Malaysian Flag"**! A triumph earned not only by Datin Paduka (Dr) Hj Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir, but Malaysia, Asia, the Muslim World and most of all celebrated by women.

### Overwhelming Finish...The Arctic

For Datin Paduka (Dr) Hj Sharifah Mazlina Syed Abdul Kadir, the final mile onto the Arctic, North Pole was also a grueling journey and stopovers. The natural happening of drifting ice, ice cracking, headwind and the fear of encounter with polar bear; drained energy and not attaining as expected frustrate her. Falling ill, cough, frostbites on the facial areas, on finger and thumb, swollen Achilles tendon, blisters, all needed attention so that she could moved on. The peel off ski skin due to improper glue added to her frustration! On the 8th day she was determined to complete to the end, even crawling, a finishing that may cost her life, she was determined to end well! Pain killers, heat packs and a Norwegian medication Norsk Kulde Salve, the burning passion

to reach the end and prayer to Allah sustained her spirit.

On 17 April 2007, exuberance and full of anticipation, she got up early, determined to finish as scheduled, she skied and skied focusing only on the finishing line. Finally at 2.05 p.m. her guide did the countdown to the final degree, then 3-2-1 uttering **Allahu Akbar (Allah is Great!)**. She sobbed, a cry of joy and thank to Allah for she completed her mission to the North Pole. A victory for her country Malaysia, to the Muslim world, an accomplishment shared by her family, friends, alumni and the women all over the world, manifest in her is the unbeatable spirit of a brave lady of the ice, Sharifah Mazlina.

**Visualizing Base Camp ahead burned her spirit, slowly but surely she inched forward. The slow and sluggish move put a strain on her shoulder and legs, made her shifted the strength to the waist to pull the sledge.**





**I**t was the surroundings that he lived in his young days that sparked his love for nature. Hashim was born in Langkawi, an idyllic island archipelago where the seas, the beaches and rain forests, the fruit orchards and paddy fields in his kampong were his playgrounds. His love for nature was reinforced when he became active in the Boy Scout movement.

**'A Scout is a guardian of the woods....For every tree felled; two should be planted' wrote the founder Lord Baden-Powell in his book 'Scouting for Boys'.**

His education in the Agricultural Sciences and his subsequent attachment to the Department of Agriculture and the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) exposed him to the consequences of intensive agriculture and the extensive deforestation for agricultural development. Indiscriminate forests clearing not only destroys the biodiversity of the ecosystems but also desalt waterways. Excessive and injudicious use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers pollute the farms, streams and rivers while the water surfaces become the dumping grounds of poultry and pig farms

wastes located close to streams and rivers. Inadequately treated effluents from rubber and oil palm mills also end up as pollutants.

Concerned with the direction that agriculture in the country is heading, Hashim in his writing and in papers presented at seminars and conferences in the 1970s and 80s, highlighted the threats of unsustainable agricultural practices to the environment. In his

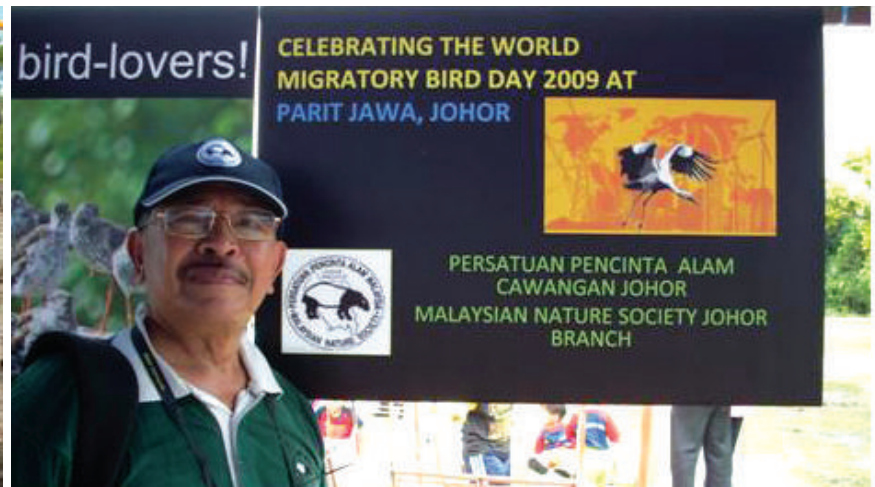


# *Greening the* **COMMUNITY**

## *Hashim Wahab*

• Dr Hashim Abdul Wahab (Dip Agri, 1959)





paper 'Modern Agriculture in Harmony with the Environment' at the Forum on Agriculture and Pollution in 1989, he suggested sustainable agriculture which integrates integrated pest management, organic farming, agrowastes treatments, protection of biodiversity and farming systems as the way to go in agriculture. Hashim subsequently proposed to the National Economic Consultative Council (NECC) where he served as a member, that sustainable agriculture should be incorporated in the National Development Plan. In the proposal he detailed out the natural ecosystems found in the country covering tropical rain forests, swamplands and flood plains, peatlands, montane, mangrove and marine and the appropriate technologies that could sustain these ecosystems.

It was during his ten years sojourn in Sabah while serving the Malaysian Cocoa Board and Tokojaya Sdn. Bhd that he immersed himself in the community greening activities in Kota Kinabalu through his voluntary services as Chairman of the 'Love Sabah - Keep It Green and Clean' Committee, Chairman of the Tourism and Environment Sub-Committee of the Sabah Business Council and as member of the Environment Action Committee which is focused on planting of trees and cleanliness as part of the campaign to promote Sabah as an ecotourism destination.

During his stay in Sabah, Hashim also got involved in organizing sporting and recreational activities including the half-marathons, international mountain bike challenge, inter island kayaking races and cycling competitions. He regarded these events as social laboratories that brought members of the community together and interact with each other.

Hashim's sporting and recreational interests drew him to scientific expeditions into the rain forests where he could trek whilst at the same time facilitate the inventerisation/ cataloging of the fauna and flora. His first exposure to such an expedition was to Maliau Basin in Sabah organized by the Universiti of Malaysia Sabah in 1996. In April 2003 he led the Expedition to Langkawi to obtain an inventory of the flora and fauna of the terrestrial and marine ecosystems, create awareness on the importance of science, enhance awareness on the need to conserve the natural heritage of the island and to utilize the information to promote Langkawi as an ecotourism destination. Hashim also participated in other scientific expeditions including trips to Mandi Angin, Terengganu (2004), Sungai Berber, Pekan, Pahang (2005) and Langkawi 11 (2005).

The most satisfying green activity, confessed Hashim, is his involvement with the Kelab Pencinta Alam (KPA) established in secondary schools. Around 350 schools

have established and registered their KPAs whose objective is to create awareness on issues pertaining to sustainable development. Members of KPAs actively participated in the greening of their schools with different concepts and names for the gardens established either herbal, cactus, science, vegetable etc. thus reflecting the purpose and use of these resources.

KPA is one of the activities of the Environmental Education (EE) programme of the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) where Hashim serves at its Vice-President and Chairman of its Environmental Education Advisory Committee. EE's objective is to impart awareness and inculcate the understanding of the diversified dipterocarp, mangrove, montane, marine, rivers, lakes and caves ecosystems that exist in the country, particularly to the young generations through training modules conducted at its eight nature education centres.

Hashim is passionate with his greening and sustainable development activities as he regards this involvement as paying back to the community and country for the benefits he has derived from the education and the perks that he received when serving the government. He also feels that he has been blessed with a happy family and happy life and wishes to share his experiences to enrich the society and make this planet a better and happier place to live in.

**The most satisfying green activity, confessed Hashim, is his involvement with the Kelab Pencinta Alam (KPA) established in secondary schools. Around 350 schools have established and registered their KPAs whose objective is to create awareness on issues pertaining to sustainable development.**



## Contributions

- Associate Prof Dr Lim Swee Tin  
(B.A. (Hons) Malay as a First Language, 1992; M.A (Malay Literature), 1999;  
PhD (Malay Literature), 2005)

The phrase 'Old Malay poetry reflects the olden Malay society' long known to many, depicts the meaning and the depth of Malay heritage, a legacy from generation to generation.

# The Beauty of Malay Proverbs & Phrases ... *Serdang Linguist*

The Malay society leaves an invaluable heritage in the form of the Folk's Art (Kesenian Rakyat). Who has not heard of the colourful Malay quatrains, poetry and proverbs such as *pantun*, *syair*, *gurindam*, *seloka*, *simpulan bahasa*, *peribahasa*, *pepatah*, *petitih*, singing and its other amazing artful linguist creations? The salient features within old Malay poetry not only revolve around numbers or the names lined out in rows, it is actually more than that. Three elements constitute poetry or any other similar artful creations. First, the thinking contained in each masterpiece, secondly the wisdom from each masterpiece, and finally the impressive aesthetic appreciative effect.

The olden Malay society is sensitive to happenings around them. They know and understand these phenomena:

thought and ponder upon them, and importantly know how to connect all these phenomena with the actual events in their daily lives. Because of these, the olden Malay society often prefer to identify themselves with all these phenomena - turning them into lesson-learnts, examples, references, moulds ways of life, educational approaches, etc - appropriate with the community during the era.

*Pantun* (Quatrains) for example is very influential in the olden society and remains popular in today's society. Quatrains are created collectively by a person or a group, then, in line with the changing conditions and circumstances, are added upon and later become rooted and are applied in the daily lives of the society.

For example;

*Pulau Pandan jauh ke tengah,  
Gunung Daik bercabang tiga;  
Hancur badan dikandung tanah,  
Budi baik dikenang juga.*

This quatrain is synonymous with the Malay society which has clear and significant thinking of the society's living practices and how the society looks upon good deeds.

There are quatrains and others art forms which are tastefully created including the Malay poetry or *syair* which contains much deeper thinking - each correlates to the mind and good deeds, behaviour, actions and reactions, honesty and much more. Quatrains and these other artful creations are created not purely just say the obvious, but feature the human



observation and their solid thinking. In another rhyme;

*Kiri jalan kanan pun jalan,  
Tengah-tengah pohon meranti;  
Kirim jangan pesan pun jangan,  
Kalau rindu datang sendiri.*

This quatrain illustrates the society's attention to details, looking very carefully to the left and right of the road, even knowing what is in the middle of the road, in this case a *meranti* tree. The true meaning of this quatrain shows a beautiful self-discipline or trait, emphasising the needs for one's own principle. Lines three and four of the quatrain are often interpreted as a challenge and almost always attempts to test the strictness of an individual.

Other quatrains also carry the same relationship. Sadly, the connections between the *sampiran*, the first two lines of a quatrain with the meaning or the last two lines are often overlooked by many, although it actually depicts the advanced thinking of the Malay community. Quatrain is actually made up of two parts. The first two lines are also known as the *pembayang* which beautifies the second part which is the last two lines that carries the true meaning of the quatrain. While the second part is considered to be the most important as it carries the meaning of the quatrain, the first part is actually as important as it usually portray the eventual meaning of the quatrain. This practice is so entrenched that in many cases one can actually anticipate the last two lines by just listening to the first two lines of the quatrain.

In another quatrain;

*Pucuk pauh delima batu,  
Anak semilang di tapak tangan;  
Sungguh jauh di negeri satu,  
Hilang di mata di hati jangan.*

Observe the lines which states 'Pucuk pauh delima batu, Anak semilang di

*tapak tangan;*' that look and sound ordinary. But, what does *pucuk pauh* actually mean? *Pucuk pauh* in nature are geometric oval-shaped young leaves with even margin and narrow sharp tips. Whilst *delima batu* is the reverse of *batu delima* - a gem stone (ruby) for making rings. To continue, *anak semilang* is a type of ring with oval-shaped ruby. Why is such ring placed on the palms of the hand? It actually illustrates that it is a special gift usually for a loved one. Therefore, when it is connected to line three and four of the quatrain, it clearly meant that a relationship should not be forgotten after it has flourished so perfectly, just like how the ruby has been fitted neatly to the ring.

The awesome way this art is presented in the Malay society is entrenched in hundreds and thousands of other Malay poetry, collected or archived with our heritage. Even so, there exist tendencies to formulate loose interpretations of these quatrains through calculating its appropriateness until one feels that it is no longer necessary to place high appreciation for such creativity.

The olden art creations are filled with aesthetic elements. Beautiful language is used, so much so that it makes our heart and soul fall for it. Therefore, it is not surprising that it has been borrowed by song writers for their songs. An artful lyrics like below is a great example for noting;

*Tebang tebu di Kuala Sawa  
Hujan manik di laman kota  
Pecah borderai bunga berangan  
Sentak peluk tangan kanan.*

*Tebang tebu di Kuala Sawa  
Hujan manik di laman kota  
Sirih rampai pinang berseri  
Sentak peluk tangan kiri.*

*Peram-peram pisang  
Pisang masak layu  
Di mana kayu bongkok  
Di situ kera meniti.*

*Ayam makan padi  
Itik makan beras  
Orang zaman  
Hai hatinya keras.*

While the above song is purely for entertainment, the carefully selected diction can leave an aesthetic impact, one which is never too far with the identity of traditional Malay art; the education or reasoning elements in them. In the above song, there is a mild insinuation and at the same time also a reminder which is communicated carefully so as not to hurt the feelings of the listeners to be educated. It is communicated in a relaxed manner with no malice. It is crafted in such a way so that the impact would go a long way and beyond. Poetry and other artful Malay creations are usually in this nature.

In conclusion, the Malay literature shows a high level of thinking of the olden society. It takes into consideration the high aspect of thinking and deeds, sensitivity towards the surroundings and with high degree of network of virtues to mould and guide its members in one glance. Its pondering ability is also rich in aesthetic elements with high language power. The gap due to cultural changes that occurred have possibly dissipated a lot of the beautiful elements used to create it. Thus, activities which give true accurate meaning will help restore the high stature of the artful creation to the current society. The objectives are of course to popularize it because it would be a true waste if such an excellent heritage be forgotten with time.

Dr. Lim Swee Tin is an Associate Professor at the Department of the Malay Language at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication in Universiti Putra Malaysia. He handles a few courses in Malay Literature (*Kesusasteraan*) at this faculty. In addition, Lim is also a writer who actively produces various genres of literature in Malaysia. In year 2000, he was awarded the S.E.A Write Award by the Thailand Government for his great achievements.



# COMPASSION

“Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things, man will not himself find peace”.

*Albert Schweitzer, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1952*

**I**t has often been said that change is hard to initiate and even harder to sustain if it does not come from within. The recent years however, have seen a welcome change upon us, one that comes from the hearts of many a Malaysian. It has to do with a keen awareness of the welfare of animals. Even more encouraging, is that many have taken a step further by being involved in rescue and re-homing missions of homeless animals, either through NGOs, privately funded rescues or on a personal basis. Here lies a fact: Anyone can make a difference and to those who have committed to the cause of animal welfare, you have lit the candle of compassion and hope and may it burn brightly within you and may it light and warm others to do the same.



# the Veterinary Profession

- Assoc Prof Dr. Bashir Ahmad Fateh Mohamed (DVM, 1981; PhD (Equine Medicine), 2006)
- Assoc Prof Dr. Gurmeet K. Dhaliwal (DVM, 1985; MSc (Veterinary Parasitology), 1988)



## Commitment to the profession

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, UPM takes pride in playing our role in the welfare of animals, taking responsibility for yet another facet of this important concern, which involves the training of the veterinary professionals. Since its early beginnings in 1972, as one of the three founding Faculties of the then University of Agriculture, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science has always been and still continues to be committed to producing veterinary professionals of high calibre, to meet the ever-growing demands of the nation. Compassionate care and seeing to the well being of 'all creatures, great and small' forms the very fibre of the veterinary profession and it is the heart of compassion towards animals that draws candidates to the field of veterinary medicine. The veterinarian oath that each one of our 1159 graduates has pledged to keep, from the time of the first graduating batch of professionals in

1978 till today, underlines the commitment towards prevention of cruelty to animals and dedication to the welfare of and health of animals for the betterment of society. A solemn oath upon embarking one's career emphasizes the gravity of the commitment.

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**The versatility, value and contributions of veterinary professionals towards the care and well being of animals and society as a whole, are undeniable.**

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They are making significant contributions in many areas today, from animal welfare, health care and management, disease control and prevention, the pharmaceutical industry, biomedical research and ensuring food safety every step of the way, from the farm to the table, to mention a few. Few people realize the role of the veterinarian in the safety of the meat, egg or dairy products we consume daily. In fact, many are surprised to learn of the specialization in the different fields of the veterinary profession which is comparable to human medicine such as emergency and critical care, internal medicine, surgery, cardiology, oncology, anesthesiology, neurology, dermatology, ophthalmology, just to list a few. There is no doubt that veterinary medicine is transforming at a fast pace in Malaysia, with more veterinarians wanting to specialize to be able to offer expertise in these fields.



From the small graduating classes of 15-20 candidates in the early years and under the strong and dynamic leadership of eight Deans at the helm, the University Veterinary Alumni today welcomes to the profession, an average of 60-70 professionals annually. Despite this, there is still an avid demand for our graduates, which we intend to fulfil easily in the next exciting chapter of the Faculty. Yes, space constraints will be a thing of the past with the eagerly anticipated move to our brand new spacious facility early next year which will comprise the academic wing, research laboratory wing, and a grand hospital and this will see us fulfilling the demand for our marketable veterinary graduates.

### Extracurricular with society

While the veterinary curriculum ensures the academic moulding of the undergraduate, extra-curricular activities at the level of the Faculty, play an equally important role in the finishing of our versatile veterinary graduates.

Under the umbrella of the veterinary undergraduate society, VETERNAK with the advice of academics, these activities include the third year undergraduates taking full ownership and responsibility for organizing an annual grand gathering for a day of fun-filled activities for guardians and their dogs - THE DOGATHON.

**This activity has gone on from humble beginnings to being included in the Malaysian Guinness Book of Records for the largest gathering of its kind in Malaysia.**

This year alone, close to 1500 participants faithfully turned up with approximately 900 of their best friends (their dogs) to join in the fun and games that were organized and ran like clockwork by the veterinary undergraduates.

They had fun competing for the impressive prizes from the sponsors. It would be amiss not to mention the wonderful support from the committed sponsors, personal contributions from individuals in terms of time and effort, those from the industry loyal to the cause and of course, the participants - man and best friend, who come back year after year. It may be fun and games, but underlying these exciting activities at the Dogathon, is the seriousness of the cause; the concern for animal welfare. The contributions, in kinds and forms ultimately go towards programs for educating the public and the campus community of welfare issues of stray animals, what responsible pet ownership is, and how neutering of strays and pets can help curb the numbers of strays.

This is taken up through a program run by yet another branch of VETERNAK, the *Prokasih*, also under the responsibility







Our veterinary undergraduates have ample opportunities to develop soft skills of leadership, organization, communication and team spirit and the like through their clinical years at the University Veterinary Hospital and also through these extra-curricular activities.

of the thirds years. The Faculty and *Prokasih* members, together with the strong and close-knit members of the University Veterinary Alumni, are in the works of developing a more structured and sustained program on educating the public and campus community on animal welfare issues, responsible pet ownership and neutering programmes that will benefit all. The successes of such activities are themselves a testament to the versatility of our graduates.

### Assuring standards... moving forward

Despite being the one of the smaller Faculties in UPM we have been blessed with opportunities to shine in many respects through the collective efforts of our staff and students. One memorable event was being the first Faculty in the nation to be awarded the ISO 9001:2000 certification for research, teaching and professional services in 2000. And again, this year

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Laboratory Services Unit (VLSU) became the first academic Faculty in Malaysia to be granted accreditation certification of the Malaysian Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (SAMM) based on MS ISO/IEC MS 17025:2005 standards from STANDARDS Malaysia. These are indeed exciting times for the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine with a new chapter just ahead of us. The future is bright and the potential limitless as we continue to fan those flames of hope, love and compassion with fervour, to matter and make a difference in today's world.

... from animal welfare, health care and management, disease control and prevention, the pharmaceutical industry, biomedical research and ensuring food safety every step of the way ...





- Fadzilah Mohd Noor  
(BSc. Education, 1984; MSc Computer Science, 2001)



# Buzzing

## Trailblazing the Rainforest

**Even** though my husband, Makhdzir Mardan (Dip. Agriculture, 1974) could have written this article himself, interestingly my two children eagerly volunteered to put their thoughts together and pen off this wonderful views about the man who has tremendous impact not only in their lives as they were growing up, but on others professionally and socially. As an UPM Alumnus (BSc. Education, 1984; MSc Computer Science, 2001), I am happy to share this with 'Serdang Sun' and made available to others to learn about his work on the Malaysian bees and how his children also learn more about their dad through his career.



**Taufik...** "My dad is funny, workaholic, creative, principled, eccentric, forgetful (at times), and extremely original. I picked a career path that is quite different from him - engineering - but I never consider that we walk on different roads. My dad has showed me that our career path should not be the limit as to what we can achieve, but what matter the most is, how we can think outside of the quadruple parallelogram!

**Firstly, let me get this straight, my dad is more than just a professor or a bee scientist; he is a man of ideas.**

He designs building (leaf-like guard house at UPM entrance- *Anjung Putra*), he makes TV documentary (Honey Hunters for Discovery Channel), he advises the king on bona fide works (Board Member of Yayasan DiRaja Sultan Mizan), he refrains from using pirated software, he produces short 3D film (Beenet Asia 3D Animation Competition), he plans for the country (AGROPOLIS), in short, he is just everything. But above all, he is a loving dad; his family is always first in his priority list. If he goes to work, he never comes back, Ops... I mean when he is with his family, he will relate anecdotes which we all already memorize. Ops...I mean we become mesmerize".

**Yana...** "A busy and diligent as a worker bee, my dad always has something on his mind. He is very passionate about his work and I think that anybody who knows him personally would concur. My dad is somewhat a renaissance man. **He is an intellectual and highly opinionated individual who is also a natural leader with a zest of creativity that knows not the meaning of 'impossible'**. My dad has gone very far in life. He did not let his humble beginnings determine his future. From being a *kampong* boy who looked after my grandpa's goats, he has paved his way to becoming a *Ph.D* holder. He inspires me to excel in all aspects of life. Caring and quirky, my dad is a devoted parent and husband who would give all for his family".





**H**ow many people are privileged enough to turn his hobby into a job? Our dad told us many times that he considers himself lucky to be one of the few people of envy who get paid to work on his hobby - What else? **BEES**. His passion for bees knows no bounds and that literally lives up to the Confucian adage that if we passionately pursue our hobbies as our work, eventually we will not have to work for a single day; our hobby becomes our job. His interest on bees was first spawned 50 years ago, as a five-year-old child, rekindled 15 years later during his teenage years, and later blossomed into a professional career as a professor in bees.

### Verses 68-69 of the *Surah An Nahl* (The **BEES**)

Familiarity begets curiosity and that gives rise to questions that eventually cultivate interest. That was how our dad developed his interest and passion on bees, spawned during his childhood over Asiatic Giant Honeybee, *Apis dorsata* colony that nested for several months by a branch, just outside the window of my grandfather's house. Daily he curiously observed the colony contracted and expanded in size during hot and rainy days and wondered what made them do that. Later, that curiosity ebbed but was rekindled during his teenage years when he heard verses 68-69 of the *Surah An Nahl* (The **BEES**) in the *Qur'an* over the radio, prior to a Friday prayer. At the end of his baccalaureate years in Louisiana State University, he serendipitously stumbled into the USDA Bee Breeding Laboratory at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He then retraced the *Qur'anic* verses on bees and voraciously read magazines, articles, journals and news on bees and decided to pursue his Masters degree in apiculture. Upon graduation with Masters in Entomology from Louisiana State University, he joined UPM and later pursued his PhD in apiculture at the University of Guelph, Canada. The expanding and contracting *A. dorsata*

colony that he saw as a kid motivated him to specifically conduct his research on the temperature regulation of the bee species, *Apis dorsata*, infamously was associated with the *Yellow Rain* during the Vietnam War in the 70s.

### His professional stint

By November 2009, our dad have completed a 30-year service career in research and lecturing on bees at UPM. His passion for bees carves a career niche for him and that relentless pursuit on anything related to bees has brought him to far out places in more than 22 countries. His travels and traverses on bee-related events to conducting researches, technical visits, sojourns, sabbatical, consultancies, expedition, attending congresses, conferences, seminars, symposia and colloquiums have endeared him with many invaluable, treasured experiences establishing his networks in the field.

To him, there is nothing more exciting and amazes him more than joining honey hunters trekking the rainforests in honey hunting expedition to harvest the honey on bee trees in Pedu Lake, Kuala Nerang, Kedah, annually, since 1983. Climbing up steep, difficult jungle terrains, going up and down the undulating hills, and trekking trails were always exciting and worth it, for at the end of the trail, it is always the anticipated wonderful sight in seeing a bee tree laden with *A. dorsata* colonies.





## The BEE tree

A bee tree is a smooth-barked tree chosen by aggregates of *A. dorsata* colonies to nest for 2-3 months of its sedentary life. Most of these bee trees are temporary hosts to bee colonies

ranging from 10 to 120 colonies on a single bee tree, the well-being of the tree is a reflection or an indicator of the immediate rainforest's health and wellness. A tall bee tree with more than 100 colonies could easily be populated with 5-8 million of forager bees, holding 7-10 tons of honey collected from millions of flowers, and probably contains 10-15 tons of proteinaceous, sealed bee brood which attract species of birds of prey such as, honey buzzards, bee eaters, falcons and wax-eating birds, as well as other natural enemies like Malayan honey bears, bats, flying squirrels, mites, beetles and humans. The

bees buzz around the canopy tree tops of the rainforest and cross-pollinate thus help sustain genetic diversity of the

rainforests. In less than two months, the trees bear fruits which succors as food to the ecoweb of flora and fauna. Our dad's deep concern for conservation of the bee trees is that of the loss of species and connections that weakens our bonding to nature. When connections between species are enriched, it enhances diversity, strength, stability and creates new possibilities. Our dad has seen more than 40 bee trees in Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and India.

## His great MENTORS and influence

Like many, he owes a great deal to people who have had a strong influence and impact on his career and character. Both Professor Edwards C Burns (academic advisor) and teacher cum friend Dato' Dr. Mohd Noor Ismail (UPM Alumnus 1955) virtually laid down the tracks for his graduate years at Louisiana State University and working career in Universiti Putra Malaysia. Our grandfather, Mardan, and our mother, Fadzilah bt. Mohd Noor, were influential in shaping his educational aspirations and character. He is indeed grateful to be blessed with some good and helpful friends of wide-ranging interests. In a span of more than 8 years (1983-1993), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) accorded him several research and development grants worth more than RM3.7 million. His enthusiasm and tenacity on bees has earned him a grant with *Yayasan DiRaja Sultan Mizan* (YDSM). The appreciation of His Majesty could not have been more complete when His Majesty joined him in the harvesting of honey from bee trees in the rainforest in Mercang, Marang, Terengganu.

He is an avid reader who reads on wide-ranging topics from magazines in science (*Scientific American*, *Discovery*), politics (*Time*), business (*Fortune*, *Forbes*), nature (*National Geographic*), adventure, technologies (*Technology Review*, *Red Herring* & *PC World*), culture (*Deutschland & Humboldt kosmos*) and sports (*Golf*).

...there is nothing more exciting and amazes him more than joining honeyhunters trekking the rainforests in honeyhunting expedition to harvest the honey on bee trees in Pedu Lake, Kuala Nerang, Kedah, annually, since 1983...





# Portrait of Students

## *My Impression of UPM*

• Hoda Hajian (Master in Economics, Semester 1, 2009/2010)

I am from Tehran, Iran and got my Bachelor of Accounting in Tehran. I was searching for a rich academic environment to continue my study in Economics and decided that it will be in Malaysia. Although it was my first time, away from the family, there was nothing to feel upset about. For me, it was a valuable chance to be independent and be on my own. More over living alone in a foreign country allows me to focus on my study as I would have a lot of time for myself, an opportunity to better understand myself. So with the worlds to discover the inner me, my favourite subject Economics and the new environment I am in for a curious adventure. I gathered all the determination to do my best and I choose UPM.

It was fortunate that events turned out as expected and there was no surprises. I have gathered all the information about Malaysia and UPM through the internet. It was beyond my expectations, as I received tremendous help from the previous/junior students. My process of settling down was fast and easy, with a pleasant and encouraging memory. An experience that taught me the joy of helping others and to be more generous, thoughtful and caring about others.

Once settled in, bit by bit I saw and discovered many things I liked. Maybe I had the feeling of respect and enthusiasm before coming and that I am very pleased to be living in such wonderful green surroundings, composed, kind and beautiful people. The other fascinating thing is the exotic bountiful and colorful food servings all around the campus and I always see people enjoying eating, it's like a daily festival, indeed a joyful and happy feeling.

Despite the long flight, when I first arrived on campus, it is huge and felt so energized by the surrounding that I did not feel any tired. UPM is beautiful, with very green, vast and natural scenery.

Located away from the city, it becomes a place to forget about all the problems and pains. It was like the images of my old dreams are getting alive.

The diversity is great, the students comprise of different races, from different countries, languages, cultures, eating different food and wearing different clothes. Here I am, coming from a distant land to make my dreams come true. UPM is now connected to me just like a relationship ring. What makes me feels good here is for me to play an effective role in the frame of this relationship. Truly I am a part of UPM, now as a student and later an alumnus. I want to express that there is similarity between that English version of UPM song and how I perceive the university, it was indeed very interesting. I hope all new comers have experience good moment in UPM just as I did when I first arrived.



...the students comprise of different races, from different countries, languages, cultures, eating different food and wearing different clothes.





# Opportunity to Give More to UPM

• Loh Kwong Yik (BSc. Agri, Semester 8, 2009/2010)



**I**t was evening and I was in the estate office undergoing my industrial training when I received an invitation to write this article. It was a surprise and an honour. After settling down, I started to recall the sweet memories of living and studying in UPM, my beloved university. While the memories came and flooded my mind, I felt tears filling my eyes and a sudden longing in my heart. How time flies for my few years in UPM were so fruitful and painted with happiness. I have no regret in choosing to study in UPM. I have gained everything I desired and now I have grown to be a better person than before.

While in UPM, I participated and was involved in organizing many programs; activities include ceremonies, courses, conferences and seminars with varied themes such as leadership, culture and community. Of course I did not do these alone, I was lucky to have a team of exceptional friends who had the same dreams, desires and enthusiasm as I did. We aimed to help in internationalization of UPM as well as enhance students' ability in terms of knowledge, experience, networking and soft skills.

With this in mind, I started by actively participating in international student exchange programs. Some of us have been to Kasetsart University and Khon Kaen University in Thailand, Kochi

University and Niigata University in Japan, Bogor Agricultural University in Indonesia and University of The Philippines Los Banos. However, the most valuable and wonderful experience is to organize a successful and fruitful international symposium, The 1<sup>st</sup> International Agriculture Students Symposium (IASS) in UPM. This symposium attracted participation of universities and students from Malaysia, Japan and Indonesia as well as International Association of Student in Agricultural and Related Sciences. Beside exchange of knowledge and ideas, the symposium also strengthen networking for future collaboration and learning of foreign language and culture. UPM students and those from abroad have

greatly benefited from the event. We strongly believe and are confident that our small effort in making this symposium a success has made UPM to be one of the well known universities in the Asian region.

Through out these years, I am very proud to identify myself as a UPM agriculture student. I always remind myself about UPM's motto - "With Knowledge, We Serve". Serving my family, university, community and country is what I am doing now and I aim to continue doing it in the near future. In the future, I wish to share my experiences with other UPM students and hope that they to can achieve more than what I had. When there is an opportunity or need, I will always be ready to contribute my time and ideas for the betterment and branding of UPM. For sure, I pledge to continue to come back to visit my *Alma mater*, my course mates and friends.

"A Tradition of Giving, A Culture of Bonding" is what I will always remind myself, remembering our lovely *Alma mater* and to serve her as we were served.



My Campus Adventure

# WHY I choose UPM

• Ahmad Yahya Mohammed Musa  
(Master Media and Communication, 2006;  
PhD (HRD), Semester 7, 2009/2010)

**UPM** my *Alma mater* was announced as one of the recognized 'Research Universities' in Malaysia and is committed to make itself an internationally reputable research university. UPM stands out in being the university in Malaysia that offers agriculture, as it initially started as an agriculture-based school and later college. Internationally UPM is also renowned as a multidisciplinary institution that offers high quality academic programmes.



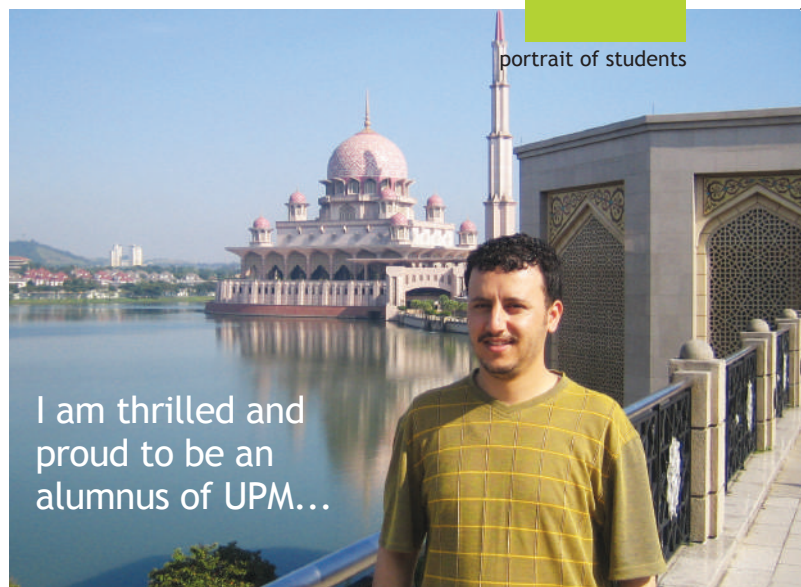
Studying abroad and away from home can be challenging, thus looking for a place I call 'home' with absolute tranquility, might sound exaggerating, but that is the truth. UPM has given that peaceful feeling almost like home but in another country. I have the opportunity to visit other Malaysian public universities and private institutions and yet, I had never felt as comfortable as I do at UPM. I am not saying so because I am studying at UPM, but rather because I have not experience the peaceful atmosphere, conducive and serene environment at any other university more than what I felt in UPM.

I cherish the memories of the time alongside my colleagues spent at UPM. As a foreigner being away from family for the purpose of study,

**I will never forget those indelible memories of experiences that enlighten my academic journey at UPM. UPM is undoubtedly unique for its spaciousness, the lush green campus that amazingly fascinates visitors.**

I myself was enthralled at UPM when I stroll along the campus for the first time. The overwhelming campus size and infrastructures are up to date with support facilities dedicated to students. Subsequently, one can easily conquer boredom by just indulging in any of the numerous recreational areas for golfing, jogging and horse riding and entertainment facilities equipped by the university. In other words, this is a plus point for my university.

The university strategic location, being gorgeously situated, where I could visit major places like Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur or the Mines Wonderland at Seri Kembangan in a couple a minute. Besides KLIA, the International Airport is an accessible place for



portrait of students

many of us is just 20 minutes drive and that is certainly another advantage that distinguishes UPM from some other universities. Worth mentioning also is the considerably rapid development on campus. I will always notice something new whenever I come back to UPM after spending semester breaks in my country-Yemen. This definitely shows UPM development is dynamic and the campus is indeed transforming to a reputed institution. The wide range of social and recreational activities organized emphasize the positive aspects of multicultural integration of both Malaysian and International students. Because of these activities, I do not feel homesick. These programs are held from time to time whether on or off campus. Thus, one gets effortlessly engrossed in the programs to the extent that, is often quite confusing to decide on which one to head for, as programs sometime overlap but at different venues. All these show how dynamic and robust UPM is.

After accomplishing my Masters at UPM, the idea of shifting to another environment came to mind, but then I finally decided to stay, as I was accustomed and deeply enchanted with UPM. It is the unique experience that considerably made me infatuated with UPM. The multicultural environment that existed on campus is an advantage that would enable me to meet new people and learn a different culture. Moreover, it indicates the unrivalled reputation of UPM not only at the national level but also internationally. A reason that inspired me to continue my PhD in UPM. Academically we are being exposed to several innovative methods in our journey to produce novelty findings for our research. UPM is appropriately named a 'research-led university' as knowledge is proficiently delivered by the qualified lectures cum researchers. Such label to UPM would not be given if the university does have an adequate and good research infrastructures and the modern support facilities for the students. When the student is in need of any additional research facility or equipment, it would be responded the soonest and that is pretty supportive.

I am thrilled and proud to be an alumnus of UPM, my *Alma mater* that the reason I continue to pursue my studies here. I will uphold UPM good name and keep the tradition of excellence passed down to all of us.



- Muhammad Sayuti  
(MSc (Manufacturing System Engineering), 2006;  
PhD (Manufacturing System Engineering), Semester 5, 2009/2010)

# Enduring the unimaginable...

## UPM you are a part of me!

I come from Nagroe Aceh Darussalam in Pulau Sumatera, Indonesia. There are many similarities between Aceh and Malaysia in term of culture and language. The people in Aceh usually learn about Malaysia through Malaysian radio and television.



Since I was a child, I had an ambition to come and further my study here. I was a tutor at Universitas Malikussaleh in Lhokseumawe in Aceh when I was offered a scholarship by the Aceh Government to further my study in the field of Manufacturing System Engineering. So, on 20 December 2002, I arrived in Malaysia to do my Master degree (Course Work and Thesis). I choose to further my study at UPM because it is recommended

by my lecturer, Dr Hasan Yudie Sastra and also I knew about UPM through the internet. After receiving the offer letter, I departed for Malaysia from Belawan Port, Medan and Sumatera Utara by ferry. At that time there was no airline service between Aceh and Malaysia. I arrived in Penang and had to take a bus to Kuala Lumpur. Luckily I had a friend who studied in Universiti Malaya to help me in Kuala Lumpur.

After registering at UPM, I had a discussion with Prof. Dr. Shamsuddin Sulaiman, a lecturer at the Department of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering, Faculty of Engineering UPM who later became my supervisor and also with Dr. Hasan Yudie Sastra, my associate supervisor. I was really enjoying my study here. The environment for study is comfortable and peaceful, the facilities are complete, with good transportation and the





library has many international journals. After one semester at UPM, I began to introduce and tell my friends in Aceh about UPM and the available facilities here. Five of my friends decided to further their study at UPM. I was also enjoying my study and may stay in Malaysia because I have a lot of friends from all races and we usually share our experiences and cultures. After two semesters and completing my 18 credit hours (6 subjects) of requirement, I started my proposal paperwork and experiments in the laboratory.

**Finally, I started writing my thesis in June 2004 but it was delayed due to the Tsunami disaster that occurred in December 2004. A number of my relatives died in this tragedy and some of my research materials were also damaged.**

In February 2005, I resumed my thesis writing and eventually submitted my thesis in April 2005 after publishing two articles in international journals. With the Blessing of Allah, I got my MSc

(Manufacturing System Engineering) in December 2005. My family was here with me to celebrate my success when I attended the UPM Convocation in August 2006.

After finishing my study, I returned to my hometown. In December 2007, again I decided to further my study to PhD in the same field and under the same supervisor at UPM. I had chosen UPM because I was so comfortable with the environment at UPM and I was also very close with my lecturers, supervisor and technicians. Besides that, all the facilities at UPM are very good especially the library, laboratory, classes, and transportation and many more.

There are many programs organized by the School of Graduate Studies including writing and publishing workshop, cracking the code and effective writing to assist graduate students including me, to do their research and write journal article. Furthermore it only takes 75 minute for me to fly from Malaysia to Aceh. To date I have completed three semesters of my study and I am doing my research under the Graduate Research Fellowships (GRF)

program. I have also presented some of my research finding at International Conference. As an International Student, I also joined the international student activities such as futsal, tennis, badminton and I am also involved in international night event held in UPM.

I am also active in *Persatuan Pelajar Indonesia (PPI)* and I became the Vice President for the 2008/2009 Committee. During my term, I proposed a number of programs to be carried out by PPI including Thursday evening discussion sessions, family gatherings, sports, music and orientation program for the new students. I take this opportunity to say my gratitude and thanks to all staff, lecturers and to the community in UPM for their help and assistance to ensure the success of the programs organized by PPI and my study program at this university.

**I have no regret in choosing UPM and I will always recommend UPM not only to my fellow countrymen but also to other nationalities. Our stay in UPM will make us a better person.**



# 2009 in pictures

Some highlights from a wonderful year  
in the history of UPM Alumni

## January

6 January - UPM ushered the New Year with a keynote address 'Creating Legendary Work Culture' by the Vice Chancellor.



## February

21 February - The official launching of UPM Alumni Magazine 'Serdang Sun' and Alumni's Official Mascot 'The Bull' during the UPM Alumni Reunion 'Celebrating 7 Decades of Alumni'

## April

18 April - The Alumni Lecture Series by Dato' Dr. Hashim Wahab entitled "Unlocking the talent, Paying it Forward"



## June

3-5 June - Alumni Conference for Excellence 2009 (ACE' 09) with the theme 'Bonding & Belonging' attended by staff of HEIs alumni offices

13 June - YPR-GSM: Workshop on Training for Agro based Sector to develop for YPR Professional Training Modules

15-16 June - YPR-CCM Agricultural Management Professional Training for students of the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM

## May

21 May - UPM commemorated UPM Alumni Day 21 May with a forum "Serdang Heritage: Imprints the Growth of UPM"







## August

8-10 August - UPM 33<sup>rd</sup> Convocation Ceremony. Noorhalizam Mohamad Noor (BSc Agri), became the first recipient of the Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dr. Rashdan Baba Gold Medal; the Alumni Gold Medal was awarded to Lim Sue Yee (DVM) and YPR UPM Gold Medal to Shafeeqa Shahrudin (BSc Agri).



## October

8 October - Eid Celebration with Alumni

15 October - Aidilfitri celebration with the YPR Board of Trustees and recipients of YPR Awards

24 October - Launching of the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology Alumni Chapter



## November

20 November - Dialogue between UPM Alumni Agriculture Fraternity and the Management of the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM

22 November - 1<sup>st</sup> series UPM Fraternity Golf 2009/2010



## December

14 December - "Agriculture production: A challenge in difficult times" - YPR Lecture Series-Dinner Talk by Mr Luc M J Maene



## Updates

# The Alumni Mentorship 2010

The Alumni Mentorship is a brief session with students to interact with mentor-alumni/staff. The program hopes to cultivate the spirit of camaraderie, pride to the Alma mater and promote the motto 'With Knowledge We Serve' and the importance of giving back to UPM. It helps students to enhance their self-esteem, social networking and build up confidence.

We welcome all alumni and staff to participate in this interactive program.

SESSION	PARTICIPATION	
	FACULTY	COLLEGE
4 Mar 2010 Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Agriculture</li> <li>• Faculty of Environmental Studies</li> <li>• Faculty of Forestry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kolej Kedua Belas</li> <li>• Kolej Ketiga Belas</li> <li>• Kolej Keempat Belas</li> <li>• Kolej Kelima Belas</li> <li>• Kolej Keenam Belas</li> </ul>
13 Mar 2010 Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Medicine &amp; Health Science</li> <li>• Faculty of Veterinary Medicine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kolej Ketujuh Belas</li> </ul>

## UPM Alumni Day 21 May & Homecoming Dinner

We warmly welcome our alumni and former staff to return to campus for a myriad of programs planned to celebrate UPM Alumni Day 21 May. In conjunction with the historical date Alumni Homecoming Dinner will be held on 22 May at Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, Arts and Cultural Centre, UPM. For details please contact Alumni Centre at 03-89466079/7886 or UPM Alumni Association at 03-89467271.



## 10th REUNION IGAUPM

The Indian Graduates Association Universiti Putra Malaysia is celebrating its 10th Anniversary. The association was formed in August 2000 and currently has 160 members. In conjunction with this milestone, a reunion dinner will be held on the 20th of March 2010 at the Bukit Jalil Golf Club and Resort, preceded by the Annual General Meeting at 6.30pm. We look forward towards a night of camaraderie and fellowship. For details of the 10th Reunion Dinner, contact Dr. Kulanthayan Mani (kulan@medic.upm.edu.my) or Dr. Uma Rani (uma@agri.upm.edu.my). The website is [www.igaupm.org.my](http://www.igaupm.org.my)



# UPM ALUMNI DAY

• 21 May 2010 • 3 p.m

*21 May*

*Returning to Serdang*  
**Homecoming**

• 22 May 2010 • 8 p.m

Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah  
Arts and Cultural Centre  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

*Returning to*  
**Serdang**

School of  
Agriculture  
1931 - 1947



College of Agriculture, Malaysia  
1952 - 1961



College of Agriculture, Malaysia  
1962 - 1964



College of Agriculture, Malaysia  
1965 - 1971



Universiti Pertanian Malaysia  
1971 - 1997



Universiti Putra Malaysia  
1997 - present

## Reply Slip:

I'm interested / not interested in attending:

☐

UPM Alumni Day 21 May

☐

Homecoming Dinner

Number of alumni / friends joining me: ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Position : \_\_\_\_\_

Organization and Address :  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (office) : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (handphone) : \_\_\_\_\_

Fax : \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation : \_\_\_\_\_

☐

Diploma

☐

Bachelor

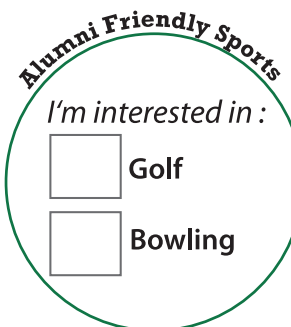
☐

Master

☐

Ph.D

Signature : \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_



Send photocopy of reply slip to :

Alumni Centre, Bangunan C13, Lorong Pongamia,  
43400 Universiti Putra Malaysia  
Selangor Darul Ehsan

For details visit the website : [www.alumni.upm.edu.my](http://www.alumni.upm.edu.my)  
Tel : 03-8946 7886 / 8946 7274 / 8946 6080 Fax : 03-8656 6933



# UPM ALUMNI DAY

*21 May*

**Serdang Heritage :**  
*Growing with UPM Alumni*

• 21 May 2010 • 3 p.m

*Returning to Serdang*  
**Homecoming** V

• 22 May 2010 • 8 p.m

Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah  
Arts and Cultural Centre  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

*Come &*  
be a part  
of the happening !

**Alumni Friendly Sport**

• Golf • Bowling • Rugby

*Jointly organized with*



UPM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION