

a tradition of giving, a culture of bonding

SERDANG SUN

ALUMNI
MAGAZINE
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Musings on the Fifty Years of Faculty of Agriculture's Roles in Universiti Putra Malaysia

Mandi Embun
Reigniting Malaysia's Forgotten Art of Forest Therapy

UPM is an **Inclusive Campus**
for Persons with Disabilities



Faculty of Agriculture



Prof. Dr. Ahmed Osumanu Haruna
Cultivating Sustainability and
Volunteerism the Academic Journey



Muntasser Al Anbagi
Fostering Camaraderie and
Lifelong Partnership



Dr. Musheer Abdulwahid Al-Jaberi
A Passionate Volunteer's
Inspiring Journey that
Made a Difference in Malaysia

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Alumni Volunteerism Igniting a Legacy of Impact

Volunteerism is the heartbeat of a compassionate society, and each volunteer is a melody in this symphony of goodwill. Together, let us celebrate the unsung heroes who tirelessly devote their time, energy, and skills for social or humanitarian purposes. Through the lens of volunteerism, we witness the transformation of challenges into opportunities and despair into hope. Involvement in volunteer activities not only assist the community but also serve as role models for the next generation, fostering a spirit of care and social responsibility.

As the echoes of our shared alma mater continue to resonate within us, there arises a powerful call to extend the legacy of our educational journey into the realm of service. Alumni volunteerism is not merely a choice; it is a testament to our enduring commitment to give back, to elevate, and to be architects of positive change.

Volunteerism is like a bridge that connects our past with our future, it is a bridge built on shared values, experiences, and a profound sense of belonging. It is a bridge that allows us to extend the camaraderie forged during our academic years into a network of support and empowerment for current students and the broader community.

Our collective strength lies not only in the knowledge and skills acquired within these walls but also in the spirit of service that defines us as alumni. As we look back with gratitude, let us also look forward with a sense of purpose, to contribute, to mentor, and to champion the causes that resonate with the principles instilled in us during our time here.

Volunteer alumni play a decisive role in fostering a sense of community, creating positive social change, and contributing to the betterment of society. Their dedication exemplifies the principle of "With Knowledge We Serve" showcasing a commitment to utilizing their education and skills for the greater good.

Serdang Sun Issue 24 focuses on the volunteer agenda among UPM alumni, featuring Muntasser Al Anbagi, President of the International Students' Association (UPMISA), Musheer Abdulwahid Al-Jaberi, Former President of the International Students' Association (UPMISA) and Prof. Dr. Ahmed Osumanu Haruna, as icons in the field of volunteering making an impact on the committed community's efforts to empower youth development in the country by highlighting the role of youth as agents of change for the nation's sustainability. Additionally, Serdang Sun Magazine's presentation also delves into the agriculture sector run by alumni and shares the experiences of alumni that can serve as exemplary stories for readers.





A Passionate Volunteer's Inspiring Journey that Made a Difference in Malaysia

Writer: Suziana Che Wil

Volunteerism is a noble act that allows individuals to contribute selflessly to society. One inspiring volunteer who embodies this spirit is Musheer Abdulwahid Al-Jaberi. His dedication and commitment have significantly impacted Malaysia, touching the lives of many. In this article, we delve into his remarkable journey as a volunteer, highlighting his exceptional contributions and the valuable lessons he has imparted to the communities.



Musheer's volunteering journey in Malaysia began in 2015 during a critical time when thousands of Yemenis sought safe refuge in Malaysia due to war in Yemen. Malaysia was the only country that welcomed and opened its doors to Yemenis. Musheer and his friends took the first step in assisting Yemeni citizens in Malaysia by addressing their issues and alleviating their hardships. They supported families by helping them with house rents, weekly household necessities and food supplies. Additionally, they supported families engaged in handicrafts by providing them with craft tools, such as sewing machines.

These initial efforts in 2015 were made possible through the financial support of generous individuals and friends. Musheer's commitment to volunteerism

continued when he began his PhD at Universiti Putra Malaysia. This time, his focus shifted towards assisting international students, including students from his country with payment of tuition fees for those self-sponsors as well as personal issues and needs. Musheer where he was elected as the President of Universiti Putra Malaysia International Students Association (UPMISA), he spearheaded initiatives and activities benefiting over 4,000 international students from diverse backgrounds.

Leading UPMISA, Musheer sacrificed his time and personal life to serve the students as if they were his own family. His days were dedicated to their welfares, often returning home late at night, only to sleep briefly before starting anew. His network with various companies and friends allowed

him to secure food for the students, ensuring their basic needs were met, in addition to supporting the arrangement of sports, cultures, education and entertainment activities. For these activities, they occasionally reached into their pockets, demonstrating their commitment in making a difference.

Notably, Musheer acknowledged the unwavering support he received from Mr. Fahmi Azar, the head of the Students Affairs Division, during his tenure as President of UPMISA. Mr. Fahmi played a vital role in providing guidance and assistance, serving as a constant source of strength for the success of UPMISA's activities; for example, Musheer says "his extraordinary stand beside us during the successful international cultural festival where more than 20 countries around the world participated in different cultural activities or during the international student trips to explore the culture and the beautiful nature of Malaysia, and other activities".

He and his UPMISA team organized and participated in over 40 community service and volunteering activities. Caring for the less fortunate, orphans, autistic children and elderly individuals, organizing educational workshops, cultural events, community development programs and sports activities.

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At the end of his tenure as President of UPMISA in July 2019, Musheer believed it was time for new leadership to serve the community. However, his passion for volunteering remained strong. Unfortunately, Musheer could not return to his home country after completing his PhD due to the ongoing war and conflict in Yemen. He found immense support from who is his dear brother and the UPM management in this challenging time. Musheer was offered a one-year contract as an executive officer in the Student Affairs Division, which gave him another opportunity to continue serving the community, especially the thousands of international and local students.

During the critical period of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent complete lockdown, Musheer's dedication to helping others shone through. Despite the high risk and fast spreading of the pandemic, the numbers of affected people and deaths, Musheer and his colleagues and the support of the Head of the Student Affairs Division, Mr Fahmi Azar Mistar, took calculated risks to ensure the well-being of students. They tirelessly worked to collect essential supplies, including

Musheer in the programme organized by UPMISA



food and other necessities and delivered them to students' homes throughout the day and night. Their selfless efforts provided the much-needed support to students during the challenging period of the COVID-19 crisis.

Musheer's volunteering journey, which began with assisting Yemeni citizens and expanded to supporting international and local students, showcased his unwavering dedication to making a positive impact. His selflessness, perseverance and ability to mobilize resources had impacted the lives of countless individuals. Musheer's tireless


Musheer during IPMISA 2019 iftar



efforts genuinely embodied the spirit of volunteerism and inspired others to follow in his footsteps.

During the pandemic, he also volunteered with his friends at COVID-19 quarantine centers, further exemplifying his unwavering dedication to helping those in need, which had left an indelible mark on the communities he had served. His willingness to go above and beyond, whether as President of UPMISA or as an executive officer during the pandemic, showcased his unwavering spirit of service. Musheer's contributions to the community, both on and off campus, had left a lasting impact on the lives of many, embodying the true essence of volunteerism and the positive change that can be achieved when individuals come together to make a difference. Musheer's commitment to empowering others and supporting those in need had inspired countless individuals to actively engage in volunteerism and contribute to the betterment of society.

During times of crisis, Musheer stood as a beacon of hope, tirelessly working to provide relief and support to those affected. He played an instrumental role in disaster management and humanitarian aid efforts, offering immediate assistance and coordinating relief operations. Musheer's organizational skills, empathy and ability to mobilize resources efficiently were invaluable.



I am delighted that my team and I during my presidency were able to make a genuine turning point for the association. You can't imagine the happiness of being part of a big family of thousands of international students from different countries around the world

Remarkable Journey as a Volunteer in Malaysia

When inquired about the motivation behind Musheer's decision to volunteer and his choice of Malaysia as the initial destination, he expressed, "Having grown up and pursued my postgraduate studies in this enchanting country, I hold a strong conviction that, irrespective of my background and origin, volunteering is my means of contributing and fostering a positive impact here. Malaysia marked a pivotal juncture in my life on various fronts. Its vibrant community and diverse culture captivated me. Witnessing significant potential for meaningful change, I felt compelled to actively contribute to the nation and development." According to Musheer, his volunteering journey in Malaysia has been filled with numerous memorable experiences. However, one particular standout moment was when he assumed the role of leading over 4000 international students after being elected as

the President of Universiti Putra Malaysia International Students Association (UPMISA).

"I am delighted that my team and I during my presidency were able to make a genuine turning point for the association. You can't imagine the happiness of being a part of a big family of thousands of international students from different countries around the world; regardless of our background, we were one happy family helping each other to overcome challenges and needs, especially enjoying all the trips and activities that we managed to arrange together. Witnessing the joy and excitement on their or their children's faces was genuinely heartwarming, and more than that, my memorable experiences with all of you have showered my life with many warmest experiences," he said.

Musheer believes volunteering can create a sustainable impact in communities as it goes

beyond providing immediate assistance and relief. Volunteers can develop long-term solutions that empower individuals and create self-sustaining systems by working closely with communities and understanding their needs. "Education, skill development and community involvement through volunteering are crucial to ensure lasting impact," he added.

When asked for advice for individuals contemplating volunteering or engaging in community service, Musheer offered, "I recommend starting by exploring opportunities that resonate with you. Discover your interests, skills, and passions, and pinpoint areas where you can contribute meaningfully.

Remember, every effort, no matter how small, makes a difference. The key is to stay consistent, committed, and open to integration and learning from the communities you serve. Together, we can create a significant impact."

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Musheer receiving an award at the UPM Anugerah Putra Ikon Ceremony



Musheer's legacy that he hopes to leave through his volunteering work in Malaysia is achieving his ultimate goal which is to inspire and motivate others to act and positively impact the communities. "I hope my volunteering journey reminds us that we all have the power to create change, regardless of our resources or backgrounds. If I can motivate even a handful of individuals to embrace volunteerism and work towards a better future, my efforts will have been worthwhile." he said.

As we conclude our interview with Musheer Abdulwahid Al-Jaberi, his passion for volunteerism and commitment to create lasting change shines through. His commitment, empathy, and determination inspired and motivated us all. His remarkable journey as a volunteer in Malaysia was a shining example of the transformative power of selfless service through his tireless efforts in community service and volunteering. Musheer made a lasting impact on the lives of many. His legacy of inspiration and empathy inspired others to take action, fostering a spirit of volunteerism and creating a better future for all. Musheer's invaluable contributions deserved our utmost appreciation and recognition, serving as a testament to the profound difference one individual can make in the world.



UPMISA visiting international student at hospital

Musheer with Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar, formerly Head of Students Affair Division (BHEP) and Mr. Mohd Husaini Amir Nik



Muntasser Al Anbagi was from a former war-torn Iraq who admired Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad (1925 - present), the 4th and 7th Prime Minister of Malaysia and disliked Saddam Hussein (1937-2006), the 5th President of Iraq. He was born 40 kilometres away from the historical mystical city of Baghdad in 1988 and first stepped foot in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 2016. He considered Malaysia, UPM in particular, as a haven to pursue his academic dream. The place and climatic ambience of Sri Kembangan suburbia of UPM suited him, as a reminded of Baghdad, his hometown. It has also an Arabic cuisine café, but he loves Malaysian fried 'mee hoon' (rice vermicelli) better. He is curious about Malaysia moderate Islamic democratic country with a multicultural people living in peace and harmony over the years as compared to his once sunny but now bumpy home state.



Muntasser Al Anbagi

Fostering Camaraderie and Lifelong Partnership in Universiti Putra Malaysia International Alumni Chapter

Writer: Baharudin Mohd. Shah
(Alumni Class 1984)

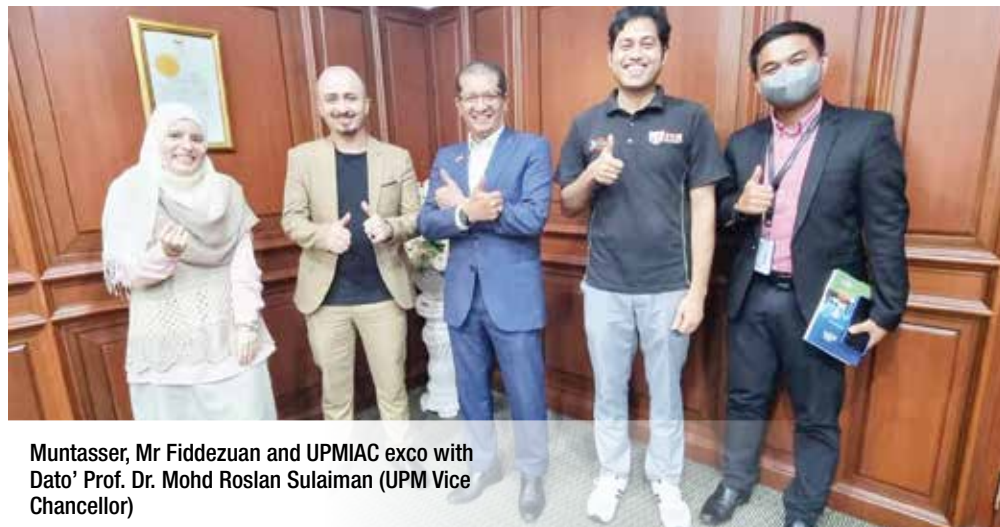
He studies mechanical and automotive engineering at the scenic lakeside of the Faculty of Engineering, UPM and after pursuing his master, he is now doing his PhD. Formerly, he was weak in English but improved his language competency here. He is self-finance and studies here without any form of scholarship, nor does he come from a wealthy army family. He is the rare breed of person who can always keep a balanced budget, which means living within his means. Moreover, the cost of living here is manageable. Besides being a research assistant and scholar (as seen in www.researchgate.net), he is also a part time writer for the Iraq media (Sun News and Almassa-news), and a creative mechanical inventor. He has also enough savings from his former stings as an engineer in Iraq, and a small income streams out of his family assets which are fairly enough to subsidise his studies here.

Features

He has an active and energetic personality in participating in alumni activities. The alumni activities in UPM come under the purview of Alumni Relation Centre (ARCUPM), presently under the directorship of HE Associate Professor Dr. Arba'ie Sujud. It has a very extensive and intensive activities which could be observed in their website. Various Alumni Chapters, Ambassador Societies, Student Societies are overseen



Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari (Selangor's Chief Minister) launched UPMIAC during 2022 PAUPM AGM



Muntasser, Mr Fidezuan and UPMIAC exco with Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd Roslan Sulaiman (UPM Vice Chancellor)

by ARCUPM. It also works closely with UPM Alumni Association (PAUPM) and UPM Alumni International Society (UPMAIS). A recent addition to the alumni chapter is UPM International Alumni Chapter (UPMIAC) which acts as a liaison entity with the previous mentioned Alumni organisations. It is a networking organisation that provides jobs opportunities and promoting the university to other students at an international level. It is also to foster lifelong partnership and camaraderie among UPM staff, lecturers, including local and foreign students.

As President of UPMIAC, Muntasser and his team had held fruitful discussion with several key individual in finalising UPMIAC objectives and activities. On July and August 2022, he and his team sought the advice of the Director of ARCUPM, PM Dr Arba'ie Sujud and the Deputy Director, Mr Fahmi Azar Mistar to outline the



overall direction of UPMIAC. The team also visited the former Vice Chancellor, Dato' Prof Dr. Mohd Roslan bin Sulaiman at his office on 1st August 2022 to get his insights on the role of UPMIAC.

Personally, Muntaseer has travelled through the length and breadth of Malaysia, from Perlis to Johor, visiting several Malaysian universities to keep in touch and reached out with the foreign alumni and their associations. Being a

President of the Iraq Students Society and as an automobile engineer also helped in his journey in terms of food, accommodation and transportation.

As we are in the Internet age, the first priority of UPMIAC was to take advantage of the digital age cloud technology to promote UPMIAC visibility. It has its own website, face book, twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram.



UPMIAC joined Serdang Bees Cup



Muntasser and UPMIAC Exco with PAUPM Exco

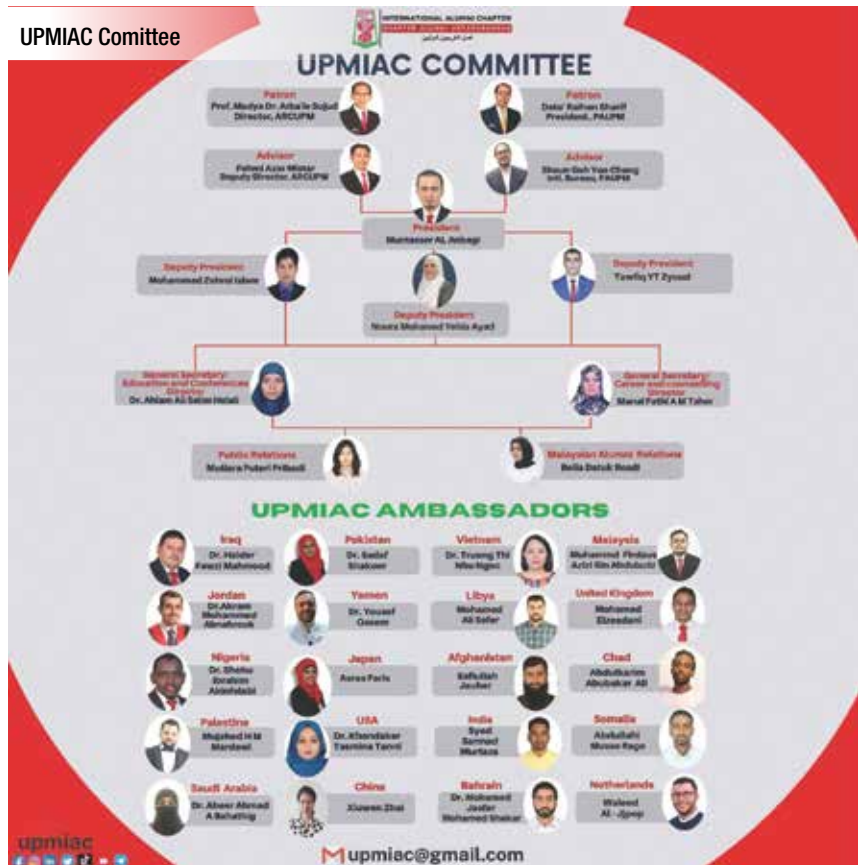
position themselves as thought leaders.

UPMIAC members also participated in social activities. They participated in Ramadan and Hari Raya days gathering activities to foster friendship.

Muntasser has deep appreciation of the Alumni efforts and suggested a golden award to outstanding alumna and alumnus. His advice to student is that: Take one step at a time in order to achieve your goals. Use your time wisely.

UPMIAC members also participated in sporting activities to promote camaraderie. They had a friendly football match with BB Panthera team at TNB ILSAS Football field on 6th August 2022. they also took part in the Serdang Bees Merdeka football Cup 2022 tournament between UPM Serdang X-Bees, VC's team of the Student Affair Department, the UPMIAC team and Club X team on the 15th of October 2022 at UPM mini stadium.

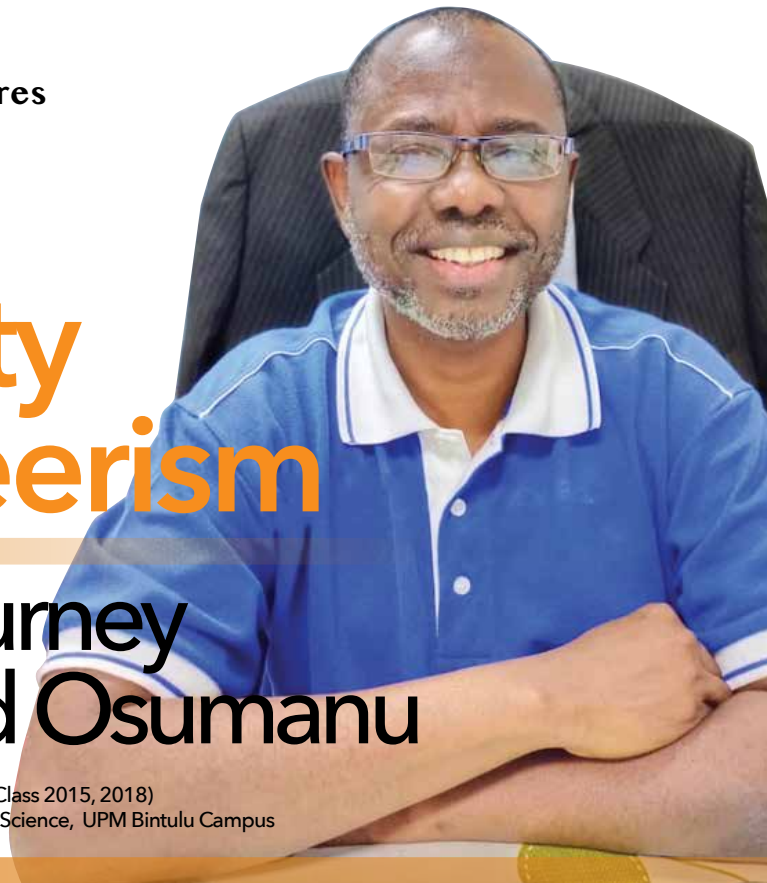
UPMIAC members were also involved in several International Youth and Academic conferences and seminars in Putrajaya and Klang valley, where local and foreign students were given the opportunities to interact and discuss about academic and educational issues. They also learn from industrial leaders to keep up with the latest trends and development in the industry and



Cultivating Sustainability and Volunteerism

the Academic Journey of Prof. Dr. Ahmed Osumanu Haruna

Writer: Dr. Alvin Lim Teik Zheng (Alumni Class 2015, 2018)
Faculty of Humanities, Management and Science, UPM Bintulu Campus



Prof. Dr. Ahmed Osumanu Haruna stands as a proud UPM alumnus, currently the Head of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty of Agriculture Universiti Islam Sharif Ali, Brunei, outlines his thoughts on sustainability and volunteerism.

Prof. Osumanu's academic journey began at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) Serdang, Malaysia where he earned both his Masters and Ph.D. degrees. Little did he know that these academic achievements would lay the foundation for an extraordinary career that would span continents and touch countless lives. Originally hailing from the vibrant nation of Ghana, he has considered himself a Malaysian at heart from his years of service in Malaysia.

His journey with UPM was nothing short of exceptional. He spent almost two decades as a senior lecturer at UPM Bintulu Sarawak Campus (UPMKB), Malaysia and ultimately ascending to the prestigious position of a Professor. Throughout these 17 years, Prof. Osumanu bore witness to the remarkable evolution of UPMKB. What was once a modest institution had grown into a thriving and expansive university campus. It was a transformation that paralleled his own growth as an academic and a person.

As he reflects on his journey, Prof. Osumanu expresses his gratitude to UPM for the invaluable exposure and experience it provided. "I think that kind of exposure and experience enabled me to really adapt nicely. Of course, there are certain differences that I think I am still trying to adapt to my tasks but so far, so good."

When Prof. Osumanu looked back on his years at UPMKB, a flood of deep and poignant emotions engulfed him.

"UPMKB holds a special place in my heart. When you work with UPM, it is always in your heart," Prof. Osumanu fondly recalls. His enduring connection with his alma mater speaks volumes about the profound impact the institution has had on his life and career.

One of his most noteworthy endeavours was the Rice Transformation Programme in Sarawak and Pahang, in Malaysia in collaboration with Prof. Dr. Mohd Razi Ismail, Prof. Dato' Dr. Nik Muhamad Nik Ab. Majid and his postgraduate students. The programme set an ambitious goal: to improve rice yields from a mere 4 tonnes per hectare to an impressive 8 to 10 tonnes per hectare. Prof. Osumanu's dedication to this transformative initiative was unwavering, but it came with its share of challenges,

chief among them being the identification and engagement of farmers in regions such as Sebauh and Sungai Asap, Sarawak and Pekan, Pahang, Malaysia.

This challenge of 'carbon sinking' highlights the urgency of developing sustainable practices and innovative solutions to counterbalance the ongoing release of carbon into the atmosphere. But what truly sets Prof. Osumanu apart is his unwavering commitment to sustainability.

His ability to bridge the gap between academia and the farming community played a pivotal role in the programme's success. "I firmly believe that as researchers, it is essential to empathize with farmers in addition to using simple or plain language to convey our message not forgetting coming down to their level with utmost respect and sincerity" he added.

"Despite being a foreigner in understanding Bahasa Melayu, I gave it my all in bridging the communication gap. I believe they can perceive our sincerity in our efforts to assist them in developing their land," he said.

Renowned for his exceptional expertise in soil fertility and management, Prof. Osumanu has been a sought-after speaker at numerous events and forums at the national and international levels. His invitations extend beyond academic circles to include industry professionals and local farmers who are eager to tap into his wealth of knowledge.

Beyond his work in agriculture, Prof. Osumanu has been a passionate advocate for environmental conservation and volunteerism through tree planting initiatives.

He acknowledges the enthusiastic students he encountered at UPM, especially those championing sustainability and the "go green" concept. He often reminds them not to focus on personal incentives, saying, "Never ask what I gain from this."

During his tenure as a Fellow Head at Kolej Sri Rajang, he assumed a multifaceted role that afforded him the opportunity to oversee a diverse array of student programmes and initiatives.

A fellow in residential colleges typically refers to a student advisor or mentor who plays a significant role in fostering a positive and supportive living and learning environment within the college.

He has supervised ample of tree-planting initiatives with the local communities. He saw these initiatives as not only a means of environmental conservation but also as a powerful way to foster a sense of responsibility and empathy among the students.

He became an invaluable mentor and guide to his fellow students, offering guidance, support, and encouragement to help them navigate the challenges of college life: whether it was providing academic assistance, offering



“ UPMKB holds a special place in my heart. When you work with UPM, it is always in your heart, Prof. Osumanu fondly recalls. ”

At present, the Malaysian government has implemented various policies and initiatives aimed at improving food security, including promoting sustainable agriculture, increasing self-sufficiency in key food items and addressing food waste.

Currently, he is dedicated to transforming the paddy industry in Brunei. His approach involves advising farmers on soil quality or health via regenerative farming, utilizing organic amendments from waste materials such as animal and plant residues. What sets him apart is his ability to connect with farmers on a personal level.

He who is also the former Director, and Head of Biodiversity Borneo Laboratory, Institut Ekosains Borneo (IEB) has won multiple international awards for his research in enhancing soil and crop productivity for food security.

Features

career advice or simply lending a sympathetic ear.

Dr. Keeren Sundara Rajoo, who has worked alongside Prof. Osumanu during his three years in UPMKB has expressed pride in being able to work with him.

Prof. Osumanu further emphasizes, "Prioritizing functional education over academic output alone promotes a more comprehensive and relevant approach to learning. It values the development of skills and knowledge that enable individuals to thrive in the real world, emphasizing not just what

Jusop and among others for his success.

He is a firm believer in the immense potential of alumni networks and their capacity to make a lasting impact. He envisioned an extensive alumni database that would serve as a repository of knowledge, expertise and experience.



“It's not solely about the grades you achieve, but rather how effectively you apply your knowledge in the real world..”

Prof. Osumanu research team bagged three awards in the 6th Edition International Invention Innovation Competition in Canada (ICAN2021) and won Gold and Platinum award at the 23rd British Invention Show 2023

Such a database, he believes that not only foster a sense of community among former students but also create opportunities for collaboration and mentorship. By cataloguing the diverse skills and achievements of alumni, this resource would enable individuals to connect with like-minded professionals and access a wealth of knowledge and guidance.

In his view, this initiative would not only strengthen the bonds between alumni and their alma mater but also empower them to collectively address the challenges of the modern world, making a tangible and positive difference in their respective fields and beyond.

“UPMKB has lost an invaluable educator and researcher” upon hearing of Prof. Osumanu’s departure. This sentiment underscores the profound impact that Prof. Osumanu has had on the academic and research community at UPMKB and it reflects the sense of loss that his departure represents,” he said.

Prof. Osumanu is held in high regard by the students and his peers for his warm and compassionate nature. His kind demeanour has earned him a special place in the hearts of those he interacts with.

In his own heartfelt words, Prof. Osumanu emphasizes, “It’s not solely about the grades you achieve, but rather, how effectively you apply your knowledge in the real world, a concept often referred to as functional education. This practical application of knowledge holds greater significance.”

they know but how effectively they can use that knowledge in various contexts.”

Prof Osumanu research team bagged 3 awards in the 6th Edition International Invention Innovation Competition in Canada (ICAN2021) and Gold and Platinum award at the 23rd British Invention Show 2023

Prof. Osumanu’s profound contribution to the scholastic scientific world is evident through his impressive record of producing approximately 20 books and 270 refereed papers. It’s no surprise that he was honoured as the most productive book writer at UPM in 2019.

He did not fail to acknowledge his former mentors; namely Dr. Ahmad Husni, Dr. Anuar Rahim, Prof. Dato Dr. Nik Muhammad Majid, Prof. Hanafi, Dr. Syed Omar, Dr. Aminuddin, Prof. Shamshuddin

In my capacity as a young lecturer at UPMKB, conducting this interview with Prof. Osumanu has not only been enlightening but also profoundly inspiring.

In the words of Nelson Mandela, who beautifully encapsulated the essence of a meaningful life, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

Prof. Osumanu’s journey serves as an inspiring example of how education can be a catalyst for change. His dedication to sustainability and volunteerism, rooted in the values instilled during his time at UPM, has not only benefited communities in Malaysia and Brunei but also served as a source of inspiration for the generations to come.

Musings on the Fifty Years of Faculty of Agriculture's Roles in Universiti Putra Malaysia

Mohd Zain Karim
Othman Yaacob
Shamshuddin Jusop

FROM PIONEERS TO PENSIONERS

They came, they greeted each other, they shook hands vigorously, some embraced each other and some with a bit of tears in their eyes. They were the retired academic staff of the Faculty of Agriculture (henceforth is referred to as the Faculty), UPM. They were former lecturers and professors of the Faculty. Some were former students who became lecturers and later professors and retired at the mandatory age of 55, 56 or 60. They were at a reunion lunch held in June 2023, organized by enthusiasts from a newly created WhatsApp group called "PESARA FAKULTI PERTANIAN".

Formation of the the Pesara Fakulti Pertanian WhatsApp Group (PFPWG)

How this came about is best described by Dr. Mohd Khanif Yusop, the Chairman of the Organizing Committee. Dr. Khanif who was a professor from the Department of Soil Science (now renamed Department of Land Management) and was also one of the former Deans of the Faculty of Agriculture (2001-2006).



Former academic staff of the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM taken at the reunion in Bangi, Selangor

According to Dr. Khanif "It all began with a casual coffee meeting between Dr. Ridzwan and I. Dr. Ridzwan introduced an idea that would forever change the retiree's landscape within the Faculty - the creation of a Pesara Fakulti Pertanian WhatsApp Group. Enthusiastically embracing the proposal, they tasked Dr. Yahya to gather contact numbers from fellow retirees. The response was overwhelming, to say the least, reflecting the strong desire for connection and camaraderie among the retired faculty members.

When this group was officially launched, it ignited a wave of excitement and nostalgia among members. The membership quickly grew, as retirees eagerly reconnected, sharing stories, memories and updating their post-retirement endeavours. The virtual platform bridged the gap between retired faculty members who were scattered across different locations, providing a unique opportunity to renew friendships and forge new connections.

The Reunion Lunch

Among the members closely following the lively conversations was Dr. Syed Omar. Inspired by the camaraderie and shared memories, he proposed the idea of a reunion. Recognizing my organizational skills and passion for fostering connections, Dr. Syed Omar suggested me to lead the organizing committee. Embracing the opportunity, I took on the role with great enthusiasm. Collaborating with other retirees, I began the

Special Edition

exciting task of planning the first-ever Faculty of Agriculture Retiree Reunion, an event that would bring together old friends and colleagues.

The reunion committee was chaired by me with Dr. Ridwan Halim as Secretary assisted by other committee members Dr. Yahaya Awang, Dr. Siti Hajar Ahmad, Dr. Rohani Ibrahim and Dr. Rosenani Abu Bakar. Their collective dedication, leadership, and enthusiasm guarantee a warm and welcoming atmosphere, fostering stronger bonds among alumni and celebrating the faculty's achievements.

As the news of the reunion spread, the retiree community buzzed with anticipation. Old friendships were rekindled, and the joy of shared memories filled the virtual space. The WhatsApp group became a hub of activity eagerly sharing updates on their lives and making plans for the upcoming reunion.

On the momentous day of 18 June 2023, the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM, hosted its inaugural retiree reunion, a grand occasion that brought together 80 esteemed retirees and their spouses. The event took place at the Tenera Hotel, Bangi, not far from the UPM campus. The reunion was sponsored by Diversatech Fertilizer Sdn Bhd through the good office of its Honorary President, Dr Syed Omar Syed Rastan. The retirees from near and far shared laughter, stories, and experiences. The event not only celebrated their individual achievements but also highlighted the collective impact they had made in the field of agriculture.

The atmosphere of the reunion was charged with excitement and warmth as old friends and colleagues embraced one another, reminiscing their shared experiences, laughter echoed through the halls, accompanied by the exchange of heartfelt stories that spanned generations. The presence



From left: Dr. Mohd Khalid Mohd Nor, Ahmad Hj. Ebon (sitting), Dr. Mohd Zain and Dr. Khanif

of Dr. Mohd Zain Karim, a former professor and the first Dean of the Faculty, was particularly touching, and his radiant smile served as an inspiration, reflecting a lifetime of dedication to the Faculty and its students.

Guests were visibly moved by the well-curated video montage, which chronicled the evolution of the Faculty over the years. The images invoked a sense of pride in the retirees, who recognized the significant impact of their collective efforts on shaping the Faculty's growth and reputation. The highlight of the event was the touching tribute to Dr Mohd Zain Katim, the revered first Dean of the Faculty who, at 87 years old, stood as the eldest member of the PFPWG. He had been instrumental in establishing the Faculty of Agriculture and setting its course for excellence. The audience stood in awe as a video presentation showcased his transformative leadership and the enduring legacy he had imparted on the situation. In a heartfelt gesture, the current deputy Dean of the Faculty presented Dr Mohd Zain Karim with a specially crafted memento, symbolizing the gratitude and admiration of the entire community of the Faculty.

Throughout the event, conversations revolved around cherished memories of lecture

sessions, groundbreaking research endeavours, and the camaraderie that flourished within the Faculty. The reunion provided a forum for knowledge-sharing and mentorship, with retirees offering valuable advice to younger faculty members, ensuring that their wisdom continues to inspire future faculty leaders.

Towards the end of the event, a sentiment of unity and enthusiasm filled the air as attendees expressed their eagerness for future gatherings, pledging to stay connected and continue supporting the faculty's endeavours even in retirement. The faculty's commitment to fostering sustainable agricultural practices resonated deeply with the retirees, inspiring them to embrace eco-conscious efforts in their post-retirement lives."



From left: Dr. Wan Sulaiman, Dr. Hawa, Dr. Mohd Zain, Ahmad Hj. Ebon, Dr. Siti Zauyah, Dr. Othman, Dr. Shamshuddin and Dr. Rosenani

Sharing Their Memories

A number of retirees at the lunch was approached for their views of the event, and their recollections of the time they were with the Faculty. Among them were

Dr. Md Yusof Husin was formerly from the Department of Plant Protection and was Dean of the Faculty from 1997 to 2001. He became a High Value Farming entrepreneur after retirement, growing orchid for the Japanese market. Dr Yusof mentioned that:

"Our first retiree reunion lunch organized by a group of faculty retirees and kindly sponsored by Diversatech Fertilizer was a memorable and unforgettable event which was full of nostalgia. Kudos to the organizer and volunteers of the reunion.

The highlight of the event was the presence of our first and founder Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. Mohd Zain Karim and his wife. Dr. Mohd Zain Karim gave an inspiring speech, basically reminding all the oldies not to dwell too much on the past. He urged all of us to be grateful to God for all the blessings we received.

The atmosphere of the gathering was nostalgic, but cheerful with the smiles and friendly gestures from familiar faces. We respectfully shook hands and hugged tightly. The conversations were focused on our colleagues whom we have not met for a long time - as long as 30 years. We did not realize that 30% of the retirees have left us, 60% were broke while the rest became richer.

Many were sharing and confessing that they were able to travel the world with the loved ones. We really envied them. Some had lots of time raising and playing with their grandchildren. This is not to mention those who gave money to charity or sponsoring community programmes that make a difference. Overall, everyone seemed to be cheerful while hiding their sufferings and difficulties. They have the time

but less money to take care of their health. Everyone had at least one ailment or medical story to tell.

All agreed that retirement means disengagement or leaving your comfort zone, shifting your mind sets or perhaps transforming. We are living outside the mainstream. We either choose to rest and do nothing or continue doing as before and get our contract extended, while some took the plunge and were doing something different. Me and my wife (a UPM retiree) took the plunge and became real farmers by operating a commercial orchid farm for the Japanese market. So, if anyone asked me - what you do after retirement? I will reply - just mind my own business! Retire "into" not "from". Take this as the end of a new beginning."

Recalling his time with the University and the Faculty, Dr. Yusof continued: "I worked my way through the rank and file from an assistant lecturer in 1973 to Professor in 1993, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture in 1999 and Provost, UPM Bintulu Campus in 2002 and finally retired in 2004. My academic life was full of challenges, trials and tribulations.

I was the Dean of the Faculty under the two contrasting eras: the era of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia and the era of Universiti Putra Malaysia. I witnessed and actively involved in the transformation from being a College of Agriculture to a University status and from "Pertanian" to "Putra". I was then serving under four vice-chancellors.

When I took over to helm of the Faculty, there were only three departments namely the Department of Agronomy, Department of Plant Protection and Department of Soil Science. The organizational structure and composition of departments was not typical of an agricultural faculty as adopted by universities around the world. Our Faculty of Agriculture was void of essential departments of Animal Science,

Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Engineering, Plant Breeding and Agricultural Extension.

My first task as the administrative leader was to restructure and reposition the Faculty to comply with those in established universities. After several rounds of retreat and strategic planning sessions, my team successfully came up with the expansion blueprints. We added three new departments namely Department of Agribusiness and Information System, Department of Animal Science and Department of Agricultural Technology. With the new structure, the Faculty then looked closely at teaching and research programmes which needed re-engineering and revitalization.

My next biggest challenge was to relocate the Faculty to a new site within the Serdang Campus since the existing Faculty was structurally becoming dilapidated and problematic. Today, the Faculty has its own new complex as of 2011.

Several centres of excellence were established during my tenure as dean to support the revitalized and expanding research activities under the RM9 National Budget and IRPA Research Grants. UPM received the highest allocation of research grants from IRPA. As a result, a number of research products of the Faculty were successfully commercialized. One of the commercial products is the fertilizer which was produced with the private company called Diversatech Fertilizers Sdn Bhd which happened to be the sponsor for our first Academic Retirees Reunion Lunch in June 2023.

The circumstances I experienced called for revamped agricultural education to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. The future of agricultural graduates is to be well-versed with digital technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology and entrepreneurship. It will take a particular breed of Malaysians to

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propel into the current era of high technology, making UPM graduates and products more competitive as well as in tune with current demands."

Dr. Wan Sulaiman, was a professor in the Department of Soil Science. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture twice, first from March 1985 to September 1986 and a second time from March 1991 to April 1997.

"Salam, handshakes and bear hugs were aplenty at Tenera's Banquet Hall on the morning of Sunday June 18, 2023 to mark the 1st Reunion of UPM Faculty of Agriculture's retirees. I saw familiar and still recognisable aging faces of former comrades of the pen, thankfully without the aid of their name tags. It was indeed a gathering to be remembered. Dr. Mohd Zain Karim our founding Dean wore a trendy outfit, fit and looking young belying his true age. Wide smiling Dr. Mohd Khalid Mohd Nor expounding his new hypothesis, Dr. Sharifuddin Abdul Hamid deep in thought next to his attentive wife Dr Zaharah, easy smiling ever green Pak Long Dr. Othman, silver-haired Ahmad Hj. Ebon in his cool silk batik and walking stick, Dr. Mohd Khanif Yusop's finely tailored patterned jacket worn over tucked-in dark hemd (Flemish for shirt), and my long time comrade Dr. Md Yusof Husin, jovial and jubilant made up scenes that would be permanently etched in memory. The incessant chatters at chow time could only be interrupted by the silky voice of Dr. Rohani Ibrahim emanating from the PA system.

The feeling was good, reuniting with old Faculty veterans, the less old pensioners and the more recent retirees, many among them only lately came into the folds of the Faculty of Agriculture as a result of the mid-2000's Faculty restructuring. Many positive changes have occurred since then. Some of these I knew but many were also off my radar.

An occasion like this inevitably puts one in a reflection mode. A significant part of my time at UPM was spent as an academic administrator that includes being Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture on two separate occasions, March 1985 to September 1986 and March 1991 to April 1997. Looking back, there were essentially two big challenges during the deanship, particularly on the second watch, 1991-1997. One was our organisational structure and the other was agricultural education itself. Both needed urgent attention.

Even before my watch, I felt the Faculty of Agriculture had made huge sacrifices in the 1970's and 1980's that enabled UPM to grow. That was by way of acceding to the departures of three important disciplinary groups, namely, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, and food science that went on to establish the respective faculties of Agricultural Engineering, Resource Economics and Agribusiness, and Food Science and Technology. Extension Education too went on its own with the aim of providing an umbrella support to the three founding faculties of UPM (Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science).

Consequently, during those years and the years that followed, the Faculty, to put it mildly, was an incomplete package, carrying the big label 'Agriculture' but focussing only on 'plant agriculture'. By 1983, there were four departments, namely Departments of Agronomy, Plant Protection, and Soil Science, and the Human Development Studies that had little in common with the first three. It was against this background that during my watch we insisted on retaining our experts in plant biotechnology within the Faculty instead of letting them be transferred to a renamed 'Faculty of Food Science and Biotechnology'.

But there were separations that could be viewed positively by most, if not all. Department of Human

Development Studies led by Dr. Halimah Ahmad went their separate way in 1992 and established the Faculty of Human Ecology. Four years later, the Landscape Horticulture Unit coordinated by Dr. Mustafa Kamal Sharif also left to become part of the new Faculty of Design and Architecture (in 1996). We can feel proud and celebrate the growth and success of both faculties over the succeeding years.

Academia is a collegial system, based on persuasion and collective decision, in other words, non-autocratic. In bringing changes, the Dean's role is to explain, persuade and convince, not to coerce nor dictate. The externals may be the changed driver yet the change must come internally through consensus. In 1995/96, we went through intensive, painstaking and at times cantankerous inter-faculty and intra-faculty dialogues on programme repackaging and organisational restructuring. Complicating the task was the national directive for universities to shorten their academic programmes from four to three years. For the Faculty of Agriculture, the outcome was the implementation of the Bachelor of Science in Bioindustry programme that could be completed in three years. The increase in student enrolment during the early years of implementation was vindication that we had made the right decision.

Regarding structural organisation involving faculties and departments with our main interest being the reconsolidation of the Faculty of Agriculture, this was put on hold despite the various accommodations and concessions already made. The wait was not too long though. True to the saying "What will be will be", I was overjoyed upon learning about the gradual return of basic agriculture disciplines and departments to the Faculty beginning in the mid 2000's. With the enlarged, if not full, complement of traditional and new agriculture disciplines I personally

look forward to more substantive and impactful contributions to Malaysia's agriculture from the Faculty."

Dr. Zainal Abidin Mior Ahmad, who started as a student at the Faculty, became a lecturer, and retired in 2015, has this to say:

"The retiree reunion rekindled a down memory lane for me meeting the pioneer leaders like Dr Mohd Zain Karim, other former deans and colleagues. Grateful to Allah for making it happen as many others in the Faculty had passed on.

I entered the doors of the Faculty first as a student in 1974, obtaining a B. Agr. Sc. degree in 1978 and M Sc (Agric) in 1982. My first job was a research officer at Dunlop Estates Berhad, being selected for it by my mentor, Dr George Varghese, also a pioneer of the Faculty from Universiti Malaya. I left the estate to join the Faculty as a lecturer in 1983 and retired as an Assoc. Professor and Head of Department of Plant Protection in 2015 after 31 years of service. This long experiences with the Faculty exposed me to its three main core functions of teaching, research and extension.

Teaching at the Faculty in the early years made use of overhead transparencies, projector slides and hand out notes. In the era of IT in the 1990s, this changed to mainly power point presentations and thumb drives. A significant change in the new millennium at the Faculty was the increase in the number of local and foreign postgraduate students. There was a tremendous improvement in the conduct of seminars and viva voce by students. The introduction of ISO at the Faculty as a tool of assessing performance, was a welcomed addition where the spirit of continuous evaluation advocated was useful for sustaining quality. Career development of staff were well taken care of. I benefitted personally by obtaining a PhD from the Imperial College in United Kingdom in 1992. Research

activities and collaborations at the Faculty were actively done both at national and international levels, leading to obtaining numerous awards and increase in the number of publications among the academic staff.

In the area of extension, staff of the Faculty contributed much to the general public directly or through involvement in NGOs. In my case, major contributions were made through the Malaysian Plant Protection Society and the Malaysian Microbiology Society. These enhanced activities between the Faculty and private/public sectors and event management was often organised at the highest level. During my time consultation work on plantation crops through linkages with Indonesia was at its peak, culminating with a joint Masters Plantation Management programme.

My thoughts on what the Faculty should do:

- a) Take in only the best for employment as lecturers in the Faculty.
- b) Aim for research discoveries that take us to greater heights in the agriculture fraternity.
- c) Have a fair assessment of the academic staff for their promotion."

Dr. Rosenani Abu Bakar started as a student, then joined the Faculty as a lecturer and retired as a professor, in the Department of Land Management. Narrating her experience with the Faculty, she wrote:

"In 1974, after receiving my Higher School Certificate results, I applied to study in UPM. I made up my mind to do B. Agr. Sc. Out of the 110 students in my class, there were only 11 females. One third of us were from Form 6, the rest of the students were either the Diploma of Agriculture graduates or promoted diploma students who obtained excellent results in their first year examinations.

We were the 2nd batch of the B. Agr. Sc. students. The first semester was really interesting; every new student had to do Practical Work at the university farm. For most of us, it was our first field experience. The American semester system in higher institutions then was very new in Malaysia. Each semester was only about 16 weeks with continuous assessment - i.e., tests and then examinations.

The Dean (Professor Mohd Zain) and many lecturers then, seemed quite senior and experienced, having already taught when the Faculty of Agriculture was a part of the University of Malaya before the merger with the College of Agriculture Malaya to form UPM in 1971. One of the most captivating experiences during my student days in UPM was a comprehensive field trip across Peninsular Malaysia, spanning from Johor Bahru to Penang, and then the Cameron Highlands to the east coast. Accompanied by Dr. Raj during an inter-semester holidays, the trips exposed us to various farms and plantations, offering first hand insights into the captivating world of agriculture. As I progressed to my final year, the challenges of research and report writing in the absence of computers came to the forefront. Statistical analysis was a manual endeavour, carried out using formulas and calculators, while drawing figures on graph papers were time consuming. The contrast to today's digital methods was stark, but it fostered a strong foundation in fundamental principles of statistical analysis.

Upon graduation, I was offered a scholarship from the Belgium government through the Department of Soil Science, for an MSc programme in Soil Science at Ghent University, Belgium.

The transition from a student to a colleague of my former lecturers was not without mixed feelings. I managed to fit in and collaborated with the senior colleagues in

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research and teaching. Teaching presented its own set of challenges in the early 1980s due to a shift from English to Bahasa Malaysia (BM) as the medium of teaching in all higher institutions in the country. This is to accommodate a new generation of students entering the universities who received their school education in BM. Translating technical terms from English to BM was quite a task.

During the first few years, teaching was a routine work for lecturers, but we must also conduct research. For this, we need to apply for research grants which required certain skill in writing project proposals. Research grants are necessary for lecturers to attend conferences and to publish papers in journals - important criteria for promotion to the position of professors. Senior academics in the faculty were very helpful in reviewing applications of research grants. I was very fortunate to receive an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) grant for a project on rice and Azolla as a green manure, and was able to attend meetings in Vienna, Austria.

After 5 years, I was eligible and ready to pursue my PhD. In 1985-1989, I spent working at Rothamsted Research Station, Harpenden, as an external student of Reading University, United Kingdom. I was back in the Department of Soil Science in January 1990 with a PhD, ready for new challenges in teaching and R&D.

In 2011, I initiated a research on biochar, converted from biomass wastes, for waste management, soil organic amendment to improve crop production and soil C sequestration to mitigate climate change. Later, I formed a biochar research team in the Faculty and together with Professor Dr. Azni Idris and his team from Faculty of Engineering, we established and registered Biochar Malaysia Association (BMA), based in the Faculty of Agriculture. I later took over from Professor Azni as the President of BMA (2014-2018). I am still an active Executive Committee member.

The year 2011 also marked another milestone for the Faculty of Agriculture. The whole Faculty moved to a new site outside the main campus, which then was referred to as Agrobio Complex. New courses were introduced, reflecting contemporary agricultural concerns, such as Sustainable Agriculture, a mandatory course, and an elective course, Organic Farming. I was partly instrumental in preparing the course contents and was also involved in teaching of these courses. These courses equipped students with vital insights into environmentally conscious practices in agriculture.

The Faculty to this day plays an important role in the building of agriculture industry in Malaysia, despite the change in the name of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia to Universiti Putra Malaysia in 1997. We in the Faculty worked very hard and passionately not only for our personal glory and satisfaction, but also to see it grew and sustained as a centre of agricultural knowledge in Malaysia. In 2012, Dr Siti Hajar Ahmad and I received a research grant from DOA on the production of organic herbs. To accommodate this research and other work on organic farming, we established an Organic Unit (OU) in Field 15 of the UPM Farm.

The OU was also used for practical classes of students taking Organic Farming elective course. I was appointed the Course and OU Co-ordinator, with Dr. Siti Hajar as my assistant. The OU was certified "MyOrganic" in 2014 and had several visits from foreign students from Indonesia, Thailand and Japan as well as local school children. We also organised yearly 'Bengkel Kanak2 Pertanian Organik' and one field workshop for members of Kanwork, a cancer society. I was appointed as a professor in the Faculty in 2013. After retirement in 2014, I was given an extended contract service of three years, but decided not to continue after two years. Dr. Siti Hajar and I continued

working as volunteers under the Amal Putra Service and Advisors to OU till 2021."

One of the early pioneers of the Faculty of Agriculture, Hj Ahmad Ebon, now based in Sarawak, expressed his sentiments at the reunion lunch as follows:

"In early 1969, I was employed by the College of Agriculture Malaya at Serdang, working under Dr. Othman Yaacob, as Assistant Lecturer to teach Soil Science courses. I taught for only one year before I left for the United States (LSU) in January 1970 to do my Bachelor and Masters' degrees. When I returned to Serdang in 1974, I was appointed not only as a lecturer, but also as Head of the Department of Soil Science. After about three years at UPM, I was called back to Sarawak by the then Chief Minister, Tun Abdul Rahman Yakub, to head the Sarawak Land Development Board. Even though I have lost touch with UPM physically, the spirit of attachment to the institution stays strong in my heart and memory. It never disappears. I could vividly remember the names and faces of my old colleagues and friends. This reunion lunch was the rejuvenation back of my attachment to UPM. It was indeed a great pleasure to have met so many of my old friends. It was indeed thrilling to meet everyone during the reunion. It was wonderful to see so many still very healthy but I, for one, have to travel in a wheelchair.

Even during my twilight years, I keep thinking what I can do to help enhance the reputation of UPM in general and the Faculty of Agriculture in particular. The experts in soil science (current staff and the retirees) can do something to help resolve the problem of soil and/or land degradation that affect crop productivity. Soil scientists have done excellent work via their R&D over the years. I feel that by setting up a Soil Museum in the Faculty, soil experts can further enhance their knowledge that makes a difference.

Renowned foreign experts can be roped in to train them. Soil Museum experts will not take over the job assigned to the current staff - they are doing complementary work outside the scope of the current Faculty staff. I hope to look for a special fund from the public or private sector to set up the museum. Alternatively, we can set up an Agriculture Museum that can house exhibits on soils (soil monoliths), crops (common species) and/or insects, with the same mission. It is costly to maintain a Soil Museum, but a good run for the time and money spent to establish it."

Dato' Dr. Hasan Mad, currently a member of the UPM Board of Directors, has this to say:

"Dr Zain asked me to chip in what I could add to spice up the write-up of this article. I have not much to share since I only had a very short stint with the Faculty. I spent one year as a Diploma of Agriculture student, four years to study for the B. Agr. Sc. degree, four years as a tutor and seven years as a lecturer.

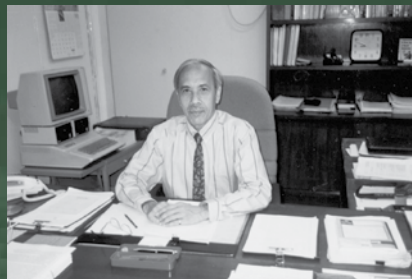
My years as tutor and lecturer in the Faculty gave me an opportunity to know the world beyond UPM. As a tutor, my plan was to quickly do my Master at the university, joined the lecturer scheme and at a later stage went abroad for PhD. But the arrival of Mr Peter Brian Dodd in 1980, a Senior Lecturer in Horticulture at Wye College, University of London, changed it all. I took an offer to study for MPhil and PhD under his supervision to work on durian, at Wye College.

Wye College-UPM Collaboration was not just about placement for further study and sabbatical leave. It covered quite a wide spectrum of activities, including assistance in the development of Bachelor in Horticulture Programme. While at the Faculty of Agriculture, I represented UPM in the Jawatankuasa Pemodenan Sektor Pertanian, at the Jabatan Perdana Menteri, chaired by Raja Tun Mohar Raja Badiozaman, the Special Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister."

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

The Early Years of Faculty of Agriculture

The Faculty of Agriculture at UPM began its academic degree programme in 1973, about fifty years ago, although the establishment of the university was gazetted in 1971. UPM, known as Universiti Pertanian Malaysia then, was established through the merger of the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Malaya (UM) in Kuala Lumpur and the College of Agriculture Malaya in Serdang.



Professor Dr Mohd Zain Karim

Dr. Mohd Zain Karim the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, UM was appointed Professor and the Founding Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM. Needless to say, in trying to develop the new Faculty of Agriculture at UPM the new Dean faced many challenges. Among the challenges were:

1. Developing adequate staff number to undertake the task of teaching and research as expected from a university institution.
2. Building up laboratory facilities to meet the requirement of teaching and research.
3. Cooperation with other sectors of the university such as other Faculties and the Farm unit to provide courses and facilities to support teaching and research of the Faculty.
4. Acquainting staff and students on the newly introduced American semester and grading system (UPM was the first academic institution in Malaysia to adopt this system).

By far the greatest challenge was to have adequate number and quality of academic staff to undertake teaching and research at the degree level. Since most of the staff from the College of Agriculture Malaya were graduates at the Bachelors and Masters level their knowledge and skill needed to be upgraded with further training at the PhD level at well-established universities overseas.

Although "ready-made" PhDs from UM Faculty of Agriculture, such as Dr. George Varghese, Dr. Yap Thoo Chai and Dr. Cheah Chooi Hwa, were available they also have duties at the UM campus to teach the remaining students there. As we did not want to deplete the number of staff at the Faculty we have to adopt a system of staggering the number of staff to be sent out for higher degrees. Thus, staff at the Serdang campus, Mohd Khalid Mohd Nor, Othman Yaacob, Lim Eng Siong, Zulkifli Hj Shamsuddin, Wan Sulaiman Wan Harun and Shamshuddin Jusop had to wait for their turn to continue their studies at the PhD level. Many academic staff of the Department of Soil Science received their training at the Masters and doctorate level at Ghent University, funded by the Belgium government. These included Wan Sulaiman Wan Harun, Shamshuddin Jusop, Mokhtaruddin Abdul Manan, Mohd Khanif Yusop, Zaharah Abdul Rahman, Sharifuddin Abdul Hamid, Mohamed Hanafi Musa, Rosenani Abu Bakar, Siti Zauyah Darus, Hamdan Jol and Peli Mat.

International Collaboration and Cooperation

One of the strategies adopted by the Faculty to improve its teaching and research programmes was cooperation with international institutions:

Cooperation with Ghent University, Belgium

Cooperation with the Ghent University in the area of Soil Science started at the UM Faculty

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of Agriculture and was continued at the Faculty of Agriculture in UPM. The main objective of the Belgium Aid Project was capacity building of the academic and support staff in the Department of Soil Science. This was implemented via supplying special equipment required for teaching and R&D in soil science, awarding scholarships to study at MS or doctorate level in Ghent University, training of the support staff (laboratory technicians) who handled the specialized equipment. Belgium professors and experts helped set up Soil Mineralogy Laboratory, Soil Physics Laboratory, Radiochemistry Laboratory and Analytical Laboratory Services in the Department of Soil Science. Through this landmark cooperation, the Department of Soil Science was fully equipped with the state-of-the-art infrastructures for R&D believed to be at par with the universities in the developed East and West. Among the sophisticated equipment provided by the project were X-ray Diffractometer, Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer, Auto-analyzer, advanced soil physics equipment, facilities for radiochemistry research and a high-powered HP Computer.

Cooperation with Australian Universities

In 1973, UPM obtained an agreement on a cooperation with Australian universities under the scheme the Australian-Asian Universities Cooperative Scheme (AAUCS). Under this scheme Professor W.R. Stern from the University of Western Australia was appointed as Consultant/Advisor to the Faculty. He and the Dean undertook the task of revamping the curriculum, plan for staff development, and arrange for teaching inputs from Australian universities. One outcome from this exercise saw many staff from the Faculty obtained places for their PhD training in Australia, and lecturers from Australia coming to lend their expertise at the Faculty.

Cooperation with Wye College, University of London, UK

In addition to the Bachelor of Agricultural Science, the Faculty was also planning to introduce other related programmes such as in the field of horticulture. Under the sponsorship of the British Council, through the CICHE scheme, contact was made with Wye College of The University of London. Professor W.W. Schwabe, Head of Department of Horticulture at the College came as an advisor to the programme and helped developed co-operative research in fruits. The programme also provided avenues for Faculty staff (Hasan Mad, Abdul Ghani Ibrahim and Osman Hashim), to pursue higher degree programmes at Wye College.

Cooperation with ACIAR

An R&D project funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), based in Canberra, began in 1986 and lasted for eight years. It was coordinated by Dr David Edwards from the Department of Agriculture, The University of Queensland in Australia. The research partners in Malaysia were UPM (headed by Dr Shamshuddin Jusop) and Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia (RRIM). For the Faculty of Agriculture, it was a dream came true. During this time, the laboratories in the Department of Soil Science were further equipped with specialized equipment that enhanced the quality of tropical soil studies (including an Isuzu Trooper for the use of researchers in the project). There was also financial aids allocated to attend meetings or conferences in Malaysia and overseas.

The outcome of these international cooperation enabled the Faculty and the University not only uplift its academic qualities, but it also helped put the institution on the world stage.



Dr Shamshuddin with Dr Eric Craswell, the Coordinator of ACIAR project at UPM Puchong Farm, Selangor (late 1980s)

Achievements of the Faculty during the Early Years of Establishment

Due to the commitments and hard work of many, the Faculty of Agriculture had progressed beyond expectation. The academics of the Faculty had won awards and accolades not only in Malaysia, but also abroad. A few achieved world-class status and being elected as fellows or members of learned societies.

Centre for Education in Tropical Agriculture

The early years of the Faculty were the years of consolidating "the tools of trade". By 1985 most of the staff have returned with their PhDs ready to play their role. Research facilities within the various departments have been established and updated.

The first batch of students enrolled in 1973 graduated in 1977. Undoubtedly, the performance of the first few early batches of the Faculty's graduates at their workplace will be the first indicator of the achievement of the Faculty of Agriculture.

Dr. Rosenani Abu Bakar spoke about the achievements of her former classmates:

"Many of my fellow classmates, had made great achievements in their careers in agriculture related government and private agencies. Among them are: Dato' Dr. Mohamad Hashim Ahmad Tajuddin who became the Executive Director of Golden Hope Research Sch Bhd, Executive Director of Golden Hope Agro-tech Consultancy Sch Bhd, Group Managing Director of

Chemical Company Malaysia (CCM), Director of R&D and Agronomy of Tabung Haji Plantations Bhd, CEO of Tradewinds and Plantation and Padiberas Nasional Bhd (BERNAS); Datuk Dr. Abd Shukor Abd Rahman was the Director General of MARDI; Tam Voon Chong was Founder and MD of Nosktahco Holdings Sdn Bhd; Dato' Arpan Shah became Director General of Lembaga Pertubuhan Peladang; Haji Asmadi Sidik was MD of Felcra Plantations Sdn Bhd; Datuk Kamaruddin Mohamed Shah was Group CEO of RISDA Holdings Sdn Bhd; Dato' Mustafa Kamal Baharuddin was Director General of DOA; Dato' Ose Murang went on to become the Deputy State Secretary of Sarawak; Hj Sunaim Sufian was Regional Director of BAT Asia Pacific South; Yap Mun Yew was a Regional Director KLK Sabah; Hj Yusuf Mohd Ashad was CEO of Felda Technoplant Sdn Bhd; Hj. Mansor Abd Rahman was Deputy Director of Malaysian Centre for Remote Sensing; and professors, two in UPM (including myself), one in UTM and one in USIM."

Dr. Othman Yaacob, the first Professor of Soil Science in UPM, knew some of the early graduates personally. Among them are Mohd Mokhtar Hj Ahmad and Rosly Khalid. Mohd Mokhtar became a successful fruit farm manager in Sik, Kedah. Rosly Khalid joined the Department of Agriculture upon graduation and rose to become the Director General of Agriculture.

At its inception the Faculty offered only one degree programme ie the four year Bachelor of Agricultural Science. This was followed by a second degree programme the Bachelor of Horticultural Science. Other degree programmes that were introduced later are: Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness, Bachelor of Agriculture in Aquaculture, Bachelor of Agriculture in Animal Science, Bachelor of Technology (Smart Agriculture), Bachelor of Science in Plantation Management, all four year degrees with Honours.

UPM-Ghent University PhD Twinning Programmes

In mid-1990s, six students (3 Indonesians, 1 Thai, 1 Filipino and 1 Bangladeshi) were given scholarships by the Belgium government to study for PhD at the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM. The PhD degree (3 years in UPM and 1 year in Ghent University) were jointly supervised by the professors in UPM (Department of Soil Science) and Ghent University (Faculty of Science and/or Faculty of Agriculture). Note that their degrees were approved and awarded by the UPM Senate. The PhD Twinning Programme in UPM (headed by Professor Shamshuddin Jusop) is in recognition of UPM as an education centre of high standing in Southeast Asia - a morale booster to a university in Malaysia which champions agricultural education. All the recipients of the scholarships from Belgium government graduated with flying colours. This goes to show that the Faculty of Agriculture was then at par with the world's best.

Putra-J 58 - Hybrid maize variety

Research towards the development of this hybrid maize variety started after realising that importation of maize grains increased very rapidly over the years to support the needs of the local poultry feed industry. The landmark research by Dr. Ghizan Saleh from the Department of Crop Sciences was directed towards the production of a high yielding hybrid maize variety. Putra J-58 is an F1 hybrid produced from a cross between two superior inbred lines and hence shows extremely high vigour compared to the available composite varieties such as Suwan and Metro. It acquires special unique features, different from the other varieties.

Papers and Books Published from R&D

During the early days of UPM establishment, money for R&D was insufficient to support big research projects that made a difference.

Notwithstanding, some staff of the Department of Soil science were lucky to be able to conduct research using money from the Belgium Aid Project or ACIAR Project. Important and/or new findings of the research by Eddy Tessens (a Belgian) and Siti Zauyah Darus was published in high impact journals, not least Soil Science Society of America Journal. Some results from the ACIAR Project were published in Plant and Soil. A compelling book on tropical soils co-authored by Eddy Tessens and Shamshuddin Jusop was published by UPM Press in 1983. When the language of instruction in UPM was changed from English to Bahasa Malaysia, Dr Shamshuddin Jusop wrote a book on soil science, published by DBP (1990), to cater to the needs of students working on sustainable crop production.



R&D publications: The Mineralogy of Tropical Soils and The Management of Malaysian Soils

Faculty of Agriculture after Reorganization

The departments in the Faculty after restructuring

In 1999, the University embarked on organizational restructuring. The new departmental structure of the Faculty was rationalised by bringing in a number of disciplines in addition to the three already in place. By that year, the Faculty had seven Departments within its administrative structure, namely, Land Management, Crop Sciences, Plant Protection, Agribusiness and Information System, Animal Science, Aquaculture, and Agriculture Technology.



The faculty's new campus located near PLUS Expressways

Enhancement of reputation and world ranking

Over the years of establishment, the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM, has developed and progressed by leaps and bounds. In 2023, UPM was ranked 123 according to the QS World University Rankings. Besides, the university is in the top 50 of the Best Global Universities for Agricultural Sciences. For all intents and purposes, the Faculty of Agriculture has played a major role in achieving the world-class status. Along the way, graduate students came in droves from many countries to get MS and/or PhD degree in agricultural sciences, supervised by some of the world's best. The Faculty provides quality education in tropical agriculture for Bachelor degree and MS/PhD.



UPM ranked 123rd in the world

Money-generating commercialized products

The Faculty of Agriculture is in the forefront of the agricultural R&D in Malaysia. Among the popular products in the past or even the present used for rice cultivation in the country are ZAPPA® and VITA-GROW®, which were co-developed from research conducted by Dr Syed Omar Syed Rastan and Dr Ahmad Husni Mohd Hanif. They were then the lecturers in the Department of Land Management. ZAPPA® was awarded a Silver Medal at an exhibition in Geneva in 2004. Dr Syed Omar won the prestigious National Academic Personality 2008 Award for his breakthrough creation that helped sustain rice production using the innovative ZAPPA®.

Breeding of rice varieties to sustain food security

UPM obtained a prestigious research grant under the Long-Term Research Grant Scheme (LRGS) worth RM 10 million from the government. The LRGS project parked at the Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Food Security (ITAFoS) was headed by Dr. Mohd Razi Ismail, a professor from the Department of Crop Sciences. The main focus of the project was rice production to sustain food security. Most of the researchers in the project were academics from the Faculty of Agriculture. In the end, they were able to come up with two rice varieties (Padi Putra 1 and Padi Putra 2) that have the

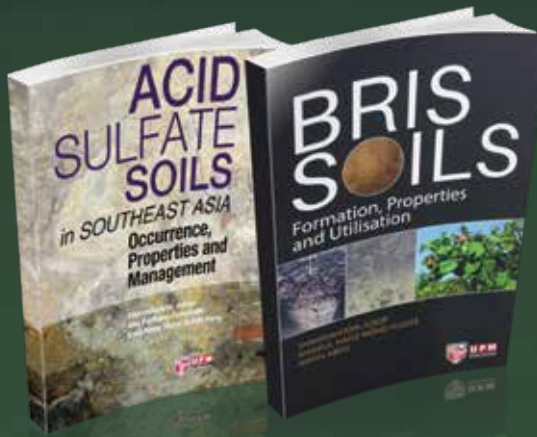
potential to produce high yield and/or can withstand abiotic stress. Professor Mohd Rafii Yusop from the Department of Crop Sciences is the breeder of the two rice varieties.

Satiri Superdwarf lawn and turf grass

Dr. Mohd Said Saad together with Professor Shukor Juraimi from the Department of Crop Sciences developed the turf grass which was up for sale in 2008 to golf courses, bowling lawns and lawns of homes or office buildings in the country. Due to its short internodes and fine dark green leaves, it is loved and preferred by the buyers.

Books on soil science and/or agriculture

In Peninsular Malaysia, agriculture is often affected negatively by low soil productivity. Such being the case, the infertile soils among the likes of Acid Sulfate soils and BRIS Soils (the sandy soils occurring along coastal regions of the peninsula) have to be studied and their low productivity problem resolved. The government had allocated a large sum of money to conduct research to turn the areas into productive land. Along the way, soil data were collected and innovative agro-techs were proposed for adoption by the farming communities. Among the books written by researchers in the Faculty of Agriculture on the two soils published in 2021 are shown below.



Books: Acid Sulfate Soils; b) BRIS Soils

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN MALAYSIAN AGRICULTURE

Agricultural scenario of the immediate future

Although the contribution of the agricultural sector to the Malaysian economy is only about 8-10% of the GDP it is still an important sector especially in terms of the well-being of its rural population. This sector of the economy faces many challenges, some of which are: low productivity, labour shortage, unfavourable prices of agricultural commodities at the farm gate, partly due to predominance of middlemen, lack of logistics in marketing, low interest in farming among the young, shrinking arable land, deteriorating ecological status of the environment due to climate change, and food security. Many strategies have been identified such as crop diversification, improving productivity and income, infusing modern farming technologies, and improving training, especially promoting the youth to accept agriculture as an entrepreneurship.

Based on the trend of development in economy, knowledge and technology, many scenarios of Malaysian agriculture in the next three decades up to 2050 have been conceptualised. Generally, they contain the following elements:

new farming techniques (vertical farming, controlled environment), improved sustainable agricultural practices, greater use of precision agriculture (drones, robots, digital analysis), adopting high value farming enterprise, and using new varieties of plants and new breed of animals tolerant to adverse environmental conditions (heat tolerant, salt tolerant, etc.).

Role of the Faculty in meeting these challenges

Teaching

Traditionally, the content of an agricultural curriculum would consist of subjects in basic agricultural sciences such as: Plant science (plant physiology, plant breeding); Plant protection (entomology, plant pathology); Soil science; Animal science; Agricultural economics; Agricultural engineering, among others. These will remain the bedrock of the curriculum. However, they should be brought up to date by ensuring the inclusions of the following topics in their content: Practices and techniques in sustainable agriculture; Adaptation and mitigation strategies to meet climate change; Precision agriculture and use of technology in farming; Soil health and fertility management; Water resource management; Integrated pest management; Agribusiness and entrepreneurship in agriculture; Agricultural policy and governance; Food safety; and Quality assurance.

In addition to the core science subjects mentioned above, a graduate should also be equipped with various hard and soft skills. Hard skills like analytical skills, research skills, management skills, and problem-solving skills are usually incorporated in the subject matter contents of the science subjects. But soft skills may have to be introduced separately. These will include critical thinking, time management, communication skills,

interpersonal skills, leadership skills and adaptability.

Research

The ongoing research carried out by staff of the Faculty should cover the following topics: Exploring the potential of precise agriculture technologies; Enhancing crop productivity and yield through innovative farming practices; Developing drought-tolerant and climate resilient crop varieties; Improving soil health and fertility through sustainable soil management techniques; Assessing the impact of climate change on agricultural systems and developing adaptation strategies; Use of biotechnology and genetic engineering in crop improvement; Assessing the environmental impact of agricultural practices and developing sustainable solutions; Studying the socio-cultural aspects of agriculture and traditional knowledge in sustainable farming practices; Studying the socio-economic factors affecting agricultural development and rural livelihoods; and evaluating the effectiveness of agricultural policies and programmes in promoting food security and rural development.

A PROMISE TO MEET AGAIN

Revisiting the Lunch Reunion, the sentiments of the exchanges of thoughts among the retirees at the reunion lunch was the satisfied feelings that they, as former members of the Faculty of Agriculture, have contributed their best to the Faculty. The achievements made by the Faculty are testimony to this, and something to be proud of. The retirees expressed their willingness to continue supporting the Faculty's endeavour to meet future challenges. The parting words at the end of the lunch was not "good bye" or "selamat tinggal", but "au revoir", "auf wiedersehen", or "jumpa lagi" - Insyah-Allah, we shall meet again.



“Sustainable Futures Empowering Higher Learning Students through Volunteerism”

Writer : Dr. Alvin Lim Teik Zheng (Alumni Class 2015, 2018)
Faculty of Humanities, Management and Science, UPM Bintulu Campus

Environmental sustainability is no longer an option in today's rapidly changing world; it is a requirement. As we face the consequences of climate change, natural resource depletion and an expanding ecological footprint, the need to address environmental issues becomes more pressing. Higher education institutions play an important role in shaping the mindset of the next generation, and one effective way to instill a sense of environmental responsibility is through volunteer activities.

Students at Universiti Putra Malaysia Bintulu Campus (UPMKB) demonstrate their versatility and adaptability through a wide range of volunteer activities. These students are demonstrating a commitment to making a positive difference in various spheres of society by participating in environmental initiatives, community service projects, or educational outreach programmes. Their willingness to confront societal challenges head-on demonstrates a forward-thinking mindset that extends beyond the university campus.

Bridging the Gap between Academia and the Community

One noteworthy outreach initiative was initiated by the Diploma in Human Development Students at Meikle Ding Longhouse, Ulu Sebauh, Sarawak showcasing a commendable effort to strengthen the ties between the community and academia. In this initiative, students actively participated in a multifaceted approach that included mural drawing, facility development and environmental education.

Through their participation in mural drawing, students not only showcased their artistic talents but also contributed aesthetically to the longhouse environment. The murals, created with the involvement of community members, served as a visual representation of the collaborative spirit between the students and the residents of Meikle Ding Longhouse.

UPMKB Students at Meikle Ding Longhouse, Ulu Sebauh, Sarawak

Whether through refurbishing existing structures or developing new facilities, the students actively engaged in hands-on projects that had a direct and positive impact on the community.

"The significance of academia and community relationships cannot be overstated. This initiative underscores the profound impact it has, reflecting the sense of volunteerism ingrained in the students," he said.

This facet of the initiative not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters a sense of pride and ownership within the community.

Dr. Hadi Samsi (red shirt) and Dr. Amni (black shirt) in the tree planting project at Meikle Ding Longhouse, Sarawak



UPMKB students painted the mural great significance to humanity



Sciences Awareness Programme at Sekolah Kebangsaan Kuala Annau

Science Education as a Tool alleviate community

By imparting knowledge about sustainable practices, ecological conservation, and the importance of environmental stewardship, the students are contributing to the long-term wellbeing of the local community. This tree-planting initiative serves not only as an informative session but also as a catalyst for positive behavioural changes that can benefit both the community and the surrounding ecosystem.

As students pursue their academic endeavours, they are not merely acquiring knowledge for personal

growth but are also becoming stewards of the world they inherit. Integrating volunteerism activities centred on environmental sustainability into the educational experience empowers students to translate theoretical knowledge into tangible actions.

Students may engage in hands-on experiences that foster a deeper understanding of environmental challenges and the potential solutions that can be implemented. One such initiative is the "Program Cinta Sains Bagi Pelajar Sekolah Kebangsaan Kuala Annau", where science-focused programme was carried out in the rural school of Sarawak which not only teaches

valuable scientific concepts but also instill a sense of environmental responsibility from a young age. In this programme, UPMKB students impart knowledge about water distillation sets to primary school students.

By focusing on foundational concepts in environmental sustainability, the programme cultivated a generation of environmentally conscious individuals who actively contribute to sustainable practices in their communities.

Dr. Fatin Hana binti Naning @ Zin, the project advisor welcomed the involvement of UPMKB students

Features



“Clean The Beach” Programme spearheaded by the students of Agri Aqua Club, composed of students in Diploma in Aquaculture, UPMKB

to participate in these impactful initiatives.

She emphasized, “We must not forget that there are younger generations out there who need early exposure to environmental sustainability.”

This experiential learning not only reinforces academic concepts but also cultivates a sense of responsibility and environmental consciousness that extends into their future endeavours.

Teamwork, leadership, problem-solving and effective communication are just a few examples of the competencies that students can refine through active participation in sustainability-focused initiatives.

As they collaborate with diverse groups of individuals during volunteer activities, students learn to appreciate the multifaceted nature of environmental challenges and the importance of collective efforts in finding sustainable solutions. Students involved in such activities often report a heightened sense of purpose

and fulfillment derived from contributing to a cause greater than themselves.

Coastal clean-up activities not only address immediate environmental concerns but also raise awareness about the impact of plastic pollution on marine ecosystems. Students of UPMKB have also participated in beach cleaning efforts working alongside Bintulu local government offices.

An enthusiastic sophomore, Khor Zhong Zheng in UPMKB believes in the power of leading by example: He said “What we do today shapes the future. By planting trees, cleaning beaches, and educating others, we’re not just making a difference now but also inspiring future generations to carry the torch of sustainability.”

Engaging higher learning students in environmental volunteerism activities not only brings significant benefits, but it also comes with its share of challenges such as resource limitations, logistical hurdles and varying levels of student interest.

To overcome these challenges, educational institutions an

important role by offering logistical support, incorporating sustainability into the curriculum, and nurturing a culture that values environmental responsibility.

When environmental volunteerism becomes an integral part of the educational journey, students not only acquire practical skills but also develop a sense of responsibility, purpose and environmental awareness. This collective approach not only builds a supportive community within the campus but also strengthens the connections between students and the broader society they are dedicated to serve.

As higher learning students actively contribute to environmental causes, they become catalysts for transformative change, embodying the notion that environmental sustainability is not just a choice but an essential responsibility for the wellbeing of future generations.

Personally, I wish for UPMKB to persist in thriving within the realm of volunteerism, fostering a spirit that boldly declares, “With Knowledge, We Serve.”



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Awards & Recognitions

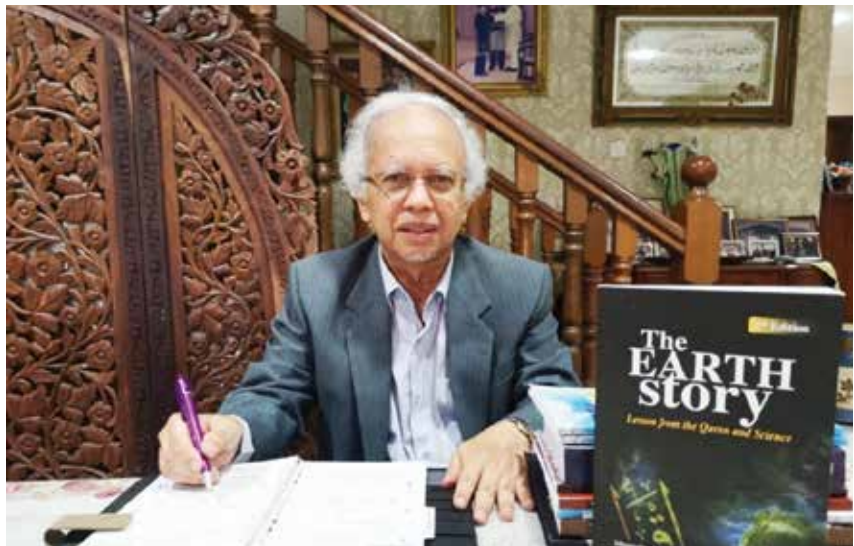


'Pivoting with greater strength'

A Working Day in the Life of a Professor - A Short Memoir

Writer: Prof. Dr. Shamshuddin Jusop

In 2022, I celebrated the 50th anniversary of my life journey in UPM. I started working with the university on June 17, 1972, and retired on June 30, 2020. Then, I began my life as a volunteer under a special scheme - Amal Putra. During the 50 years of my life in academia (22 years as a full professor), I did my best to fulfil the KPI assigned to me. To be a true-blue academic is very daunting. However, if you like the job, it becomes a passion. This article shows it all, chronicling my journey as a soil scientist, working with a public university.



Working at home to write papers or prepare slides for presentation at conferences and/or meetings in the country or overseas

Working as lecturers in a public university can be stressful to some. But I managed my time very well and was able to complete any job assigned to me on schedule. Teaching, conducting research, writing papers or books and attending conferences are our bread and butter. Like it or not, we have to do it without fail - day in, day out. Sometimes, we have to work during the weekend to complete an urgent task that makes a difference.

A professor in a public university has special privilege that only a few in the country has. Everyone in the university has a chance to travel to the exotic places in the world for meetings or conferences. In this

way, a professor contributes substantially to nation building. During my academic journey, I experienced both moments of triumph and adversity. However, on the whole, I found joy and satisfaction in my work. As a volunteer, I have the privilege of having a fully equipped office space. Uniquely, I have the flexibility to choose between working from home or spending my time in the university from 8 am to 5 pm.

The following write-up is one of the days that I have been through while working in UPM. January 12, 2016 was a day like no other. It was one of the busiest days in the past 48 years of my working life. On that particular day, I had to work without having time to stand and stare.

I drove to downtown Cyberjaya early in the morning to attend the Second Convention on Wisdom organized by the newly established Universiti Islam Malaysia (UIM). The theme of the well-participated convention was "Wisdom - Unifying the World". The telling convention was officially declared open by the Deputy Solicitor-General II, Datuk Engku Nor

Faizah, who represented the Attorney General. I was invited and paid for by the organizer to attend the convention in recognition of my contribution to UIM. I wrote an article published by the university. The title was "Is the 2014 great flood in Kelantan the wrath of nature?".

I met many old friends and/or some new ones at conventions or conferences. This special convention was also attended by Dato Dr Sulaiman Yassin (the former Vice Chancellor of University Malaysia Terengganu) and Datuk Dr Hashim Wahab (the former DG of the Malaysian Cocoa Board). They were all retired civil servants whom I had the privilege of working with when I was in UPM.

Immediately after the convention was officially declared opened, I rushed back to the School of Graduate Studies in UPM to attend Amir's viva voce, my PhD Student. I had to be around just in case he had trouble defending his thesis. Praised be to Allah that he passed the viva voce with flying colours. For all intents and purposes, the supervisor has to be in the vicinity to lend support to his student. The student defending the thesis would have more confidence than otherwise is, knowing his supervisor cares for him in time of need. Amir was an excellent PhD student who needed minimal supervision while conducting his research. He was a student difficult to come by. It is every professor's dream to have a student of his calibre. As a graduate student, he was second to none. He knew exactly what he was doing while taking soil samples in the fields or conduct research at the laboratories in UPM.

When the viva voce was done and over with, I went to my office to check letters, e-mail or urgent matters that needed immediate attention. After Friday prayer, I rushed back to UIM in Cyberjaya



The UIM International Convention on Wisdom held in Cyberjaya

Having a photo together with Dr. Hashim (left) and Dr. Sulaiman (right) at the UIM convention in Cyberjaya



to attend the afternoon session of the convention. The first order of business was a ministerial talk by no less than YB Dato' Sri Rohani Abdul Karim, the former Minister for Women, Family and Community Development. She delved eloquently on the wisdom of the rights and protections of children in Malaysia. In the talk, she explained on the amendments to Child Act 2001, which was going for the second reading in the parliament.

Leading up to the amendment of the act, she faced criticism from various sectors of society for advocating the statement "kids are not allowed to be whipped." For her, the crucial phrase was wrongly translated by the press media as "Kanak-kanak tidak boleh dirotan". For your info, whipping (sebatan) and canning (merotan) do not exactly have the same meaning. In essence, they are two different categories of deterrent -

the latter is actually allowed, but not the former. The message put across by her was loud and clear. Hence, by all means children should be protected from corporal punishment by parents or teachers.

Praised be to Allah that things were getting better and acceptable by the days and weeks. Members of the public in the country began to accept the spirit of the amendments for the good of their children. With wits and wisdom, the minister brilliantly ended the talk with a standing ovation by saying "Let success makes all the noises". I thought it was a respectable remark and an acceptable ending of the talk by the Minister.

The next session of the convention was a special forum with the theme "Islam and Unity". The first speaker of the forum was none other than Nasharudin Mat Isa, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Global Movement for the

Contributions

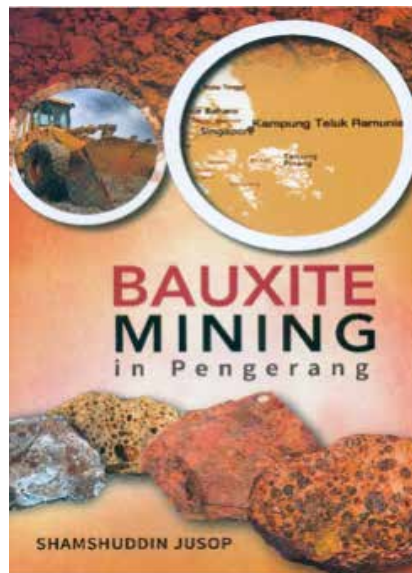
Moderates. The second speaker was Dato' Dr Hj Mohd Nai'm - he was the Chief Syarie Judge of Selangor, Malaysia. The former talked about global moderation, which was gaining popularity in the light of unstable situation throughout the world. The movement was a Malaysian idea, promoted by the government to counter extremisms in the world at large. Nasharudin Mat Isa was a seasoned politician who understood exactly what he was talking about or dealing with. He concluded that he didn't mind spending a penny to save a pound in trying to deliver the trust given to him. While he was busy campaigning about moderation, an IS-backed gunfire broke out in the street of Jakarta that wreaked havoc in the country.

The learned judge explained with eloquence about Muslim family disputes in Malaysia - i.e., about divorce cases involving payment for children maintenance to the ex-wives and children. There were 12,300 ex-husbands in the country who had been ordered by the Syarie Court to pay the maintenance fees, but failed to do so regularly or on time as stipulated by the court. This was a very worrying situation. The fathers had compromised the welfare of their children who were normally ordered to stay with their ex-wife. The problem had to be amicably resolved.

During the Q&A Session, I asked the learned judge, "What happens if the fathers have nothing to offer - i.e., no money, no car or no nothing"? He eloquently replied, 'The court could also go to the grandparents for help'. The implication of this statement is that we have to check our would-be son in-laws before giving him the consent to marry our daughters. We are equally responsible to bring up their children should the holy matrimony fails to work to the satisfaction of the married couples. This was an important lesson I learned that day.

When the convention was officially closed, I quickly drove home to prepare for a one hour TV appearance. I was requested to talk about the problems related to bauxite mining activities in Kuantan, Pahang. It was telecast live at 10-11 pm from the Bernama TV station in Kuala Lumpur that night. Bauxite mining in the vicinity of Kuantan had no doubt provided income to the operators. But the activities resulted in untold damages or causing serious environmental issues and/or health hazards. The government ordered a moratorium on mining activities for three months to amicably resolve the problems once and for all.

What is bauxite anyway? Why people in the vicinity of Kuantan as well as in Jabor Valley (the areas in Pahang-Southern Terengganu border) were desperately mining it without due regard to the environmental damages and/or land degradation? Bauxite contains



Bauxite mining activities in Pengerang, Johor

aluminium (Al) that is widely used to manufacture industrial goods and kitchen utensils. The ore contains gibbsite $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$ mixed with goethite (FeOOH), hematite Fe_2O_3 and kaolin. Bauxite in Kuantan is formed from a basic igneous rock named basalt. The reddish colour of the ore is due to the presence of red hematite. More info about bauxite mining in Malaysia can be obtained from my book, but written on the bauxite mined at Pengerang, Johor. In my opinion, its mineralogy is almost the same as that found in the vicinity of Kuantan, Pahang.

A small amount of anatase TiO_2 could possibly be present in the bauxite of Kuantan region. Anatase is a source of Ti, which is an even more precious metal than Al. For this reason, bauxite gets premium price at the marketplace. No wonder people in the vicinity of Kuantan and/or Jabor Valley mined bauxite like crazy! The bauxite was transported from the mining sites to the Kuantan Port by lorry to be exported to China.

“What happens if the fathers have nothing to offer - i.e., no money, no car or no nothing”? He eloquently replied, ‘The court could also go to the grandparents for help’



A mining pit in an oil palm plantation in Kuantan, Pahang. Courtesy of Google LLC

(https://www.google.com/search?q=bauxite+mining+in+kuantan&rlz=1C1CHNQ_enMY654MY655&espv=2&biw=1366&bih=667&tbn=isch&imgil=2N3UTZXqzuRWnM)

Oil palm plantations in FELDA Schemes were not spared by the mining activities. During the process of bauxite mining, the palms on sites were removed and the topsoil was excavated and compiled besides the mining pits. The weathered basaltic materials containing bauxite were taken away by lorry, leaving behind huge holes in the plantations. Even if the topsoil was put back into the mining pits, it would not be the same as it once was. There would not be enough topsoil to cover the whole ponds. During wet monsoon season, the mining ponds would be flooded with reddish muddy water having bauxite. This eventually resulted in the overflow of the water containing reddish sediments, seriously damaging and/or destroying other areas in the plantations. The affected land in the surrounding areas was degraded beyond repair.

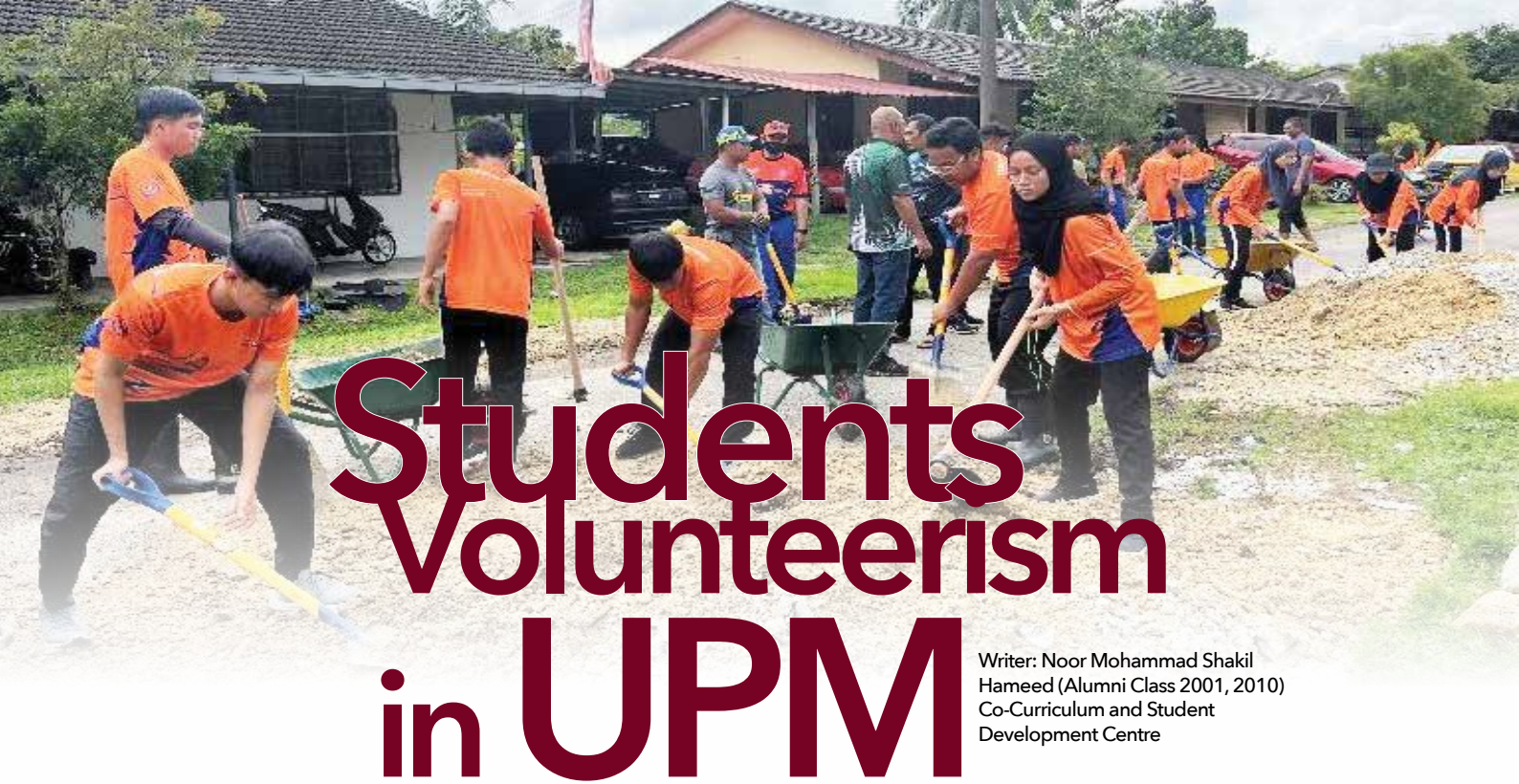
Right now mining of minerals from soil/rock takes priority over other economic activities. Be that as it may, the government is going to draw up a new all-compassing legislation to allow Federal

Government to effectively regulate and monitor mining activities. In essence, it is the way forward to achieve sustainable economic development via mining activities.

Bauxite mining in the vicinity of Kuantan had no doubt provided income to the operators. But the activities resulted in untold damages or causing serious environmental issues and/or health hazards.

In conclusion, I want to put across this important message for the attention of the public in Malaysia. I am hoping that the Minister for Women, Family and Community Development will put the money where the mouth is. Her words should be followed by action by the sitting government. As for the bauxite mining activities in Kuantan and Jabor Valley, enforcement to the rules and regulations should be strictly followed or adhered to. The officer in-charge, whether they are at the state or federal level, should walk the talk. Failing which, all efforts carried out during the moratorium will go to wastes or gone down the drain.

After the TV show was done and over with, I went home and slept soundly, knowing that I had done my job that day. I did it without regret whatsoever. Like I said earlier in the article, if we like to do a certain job, it becomes a passion. What I have written in this article is what a hectic life in academia is all about. All the same, I love my job that paid rent. Believe me, I won't spend the rest of my academic life at UPM in any other way.



Students Volunteerism in UPM

Writer: Noor Mohammad Shakil Hameed (Alumni Class 2001, 2010)
Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre

Introduction

Volunteerism has become familiar to UPM students through their involvement in various volunteering platforms and programmes during their studies on campus. The students will be involved as organizers or participants in these volunteering programmes which are organized by outside parties.

At UPM, volunteering activities are held at many levels, namely university, residential college, faculty and students association or clubs. Activities at university level, for example, are coordinated under the Putra Bakti brand managed by the Corporate Strategy and Relations Center (PSPK), while the College and Faculty Representative Council coordinate activities at the residential college and faculty level. However, various community programmes on Bakti Siswa platform are handled by Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP) through the involvement of students who are taking Credited Co-curriculum Courses (KKB).

Generally, the university encourages students on campus to take part in volunteering activities to familiarize them with the culture of helping and caring for those in need which corresponds to UPM's motto, "With Knowledge, We Serve".

Some of the popular volunteering activities among UPM students are *gotong-royong*, preparing food and clothes for the homeless people, free donated programme, flood relief operation, tree planting programme, visiting the elderly and people with disabilities (OKU) at welfare houses as well as volunteering activities for sharing knowledge and skills at schools.

Credited Co-curriculum Courses

The University has taken the initiative to familiarize volunteerism among the students structurally and systematically by offering Credited Co-curriculum Courses (KBB) which is handled by the Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP).

Two courses based on volunteerism element offered every semester are Bakti Siswa and Volunteerism Development handled by trained and experienced facilitators. UPM students' interest towards volunteerism are proven to be true

when every semester, the number of classes that are opened for these two courses keep increasing and are very competitive. This shows that UPM students always want to gain more knowledge regarding volunteering activities and want to be involved more actively with the programmes.

Throughout the first semester of 2022/2023 session, 16 programmes based on volunteerism have been planned and held by students who are taking these two courses.

Some of the interesting activities that have been conducted are *Program Semaian Kasih* in which the volunteers visited the orphans and asnaf groups at Rumah Anak Yatim dan Asnaf As-Solihin, in Banting, Selangor, *Program Kami Kasih, Kami Sayang* with the orphans at Rumah Bakti Al-Kausar, in Bangi, Selangor, *Program Jalinan Kasih* with primary schoolers and the residents of Hulu Langat, *Program Agro-Fun* with the orphans at Asrama Damai Kuang, Rawang, Selangor, *Program Remaja Bayangan Sahabat* with the youths and the locals at Pantai Dalam and *Program We Love, We Care* at Melaka Zoo.



Prof. Dr. Arifin Abdu, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs and Alumni together with MBOR representatives and volunteers who have made the Putra LoVA program a success at Panggung Percubaan, UPM



Volunteerism activities with community that were conducted by students during Putra LoVA

Students' involvement in volunteering activities, especially the freshmen, will surely help in shaping their integrity and positivity. The experiences gain in the early session of the study will help them to be more enthusiastic in continuing to be involved in volunteering programmes at UPM and will continue doing so after graduation.

Putra Longest Non-Stop Volunteerism Activities (PUTRA LoVA)

The Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP) is also stepping forward to be more proactive to invigorate volunteerism among students by holding a non-stop volunteering programme for 40 hours that was known as Putra Longest Non-Stop Volunteerism Activities (PUTRA LoVA) on the 10th to 11th December 2022. The programme was recognized by Malaysia Book of Records (MBOR) with the involvement of 40 volunteering programmes such as the Klang River clean-up project, visit to asnaf house residents, distribution of food to the front liners and *gotong-royong* at several selected locations. The programme was

conducted around UPM, Seri Serdang, Putrajaya and a few other locations in the Klang Valley which has helped a lot in empowering essential skills in UPM students.

Through a big program like this that involves parties inside and outside of UPM including government agencies, corporates and NGOs, students are able to gain experiences, exposure and skills when given the responsibilities to handle volunteering activities to cater to the 40 programmes needed. Acknowledgement is given to this programme by MBOR due to the active involvement and great commitment from the students.

Human Development Club (INSAN)

The Human Development Club (INSAN) is a student association established specifically to boost UPM students' human development through various volunteering activities.

This club is put under Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP) with the director as the club advisor.



The Malaysia Book of Record (MBOR) for Longest Non-Stop Volunteerism Activities (Putra LoVA) through 40 volunteerism activities

Students, as club members, are given the freedom and platforms they need to plan and handle programmes with minimal supervision from PKPP. This will give great opportunities to students to learn the ways of organizing volunteering activities.

The club members are always active in conducting various programmes to benefit the members and targeted groups. One of the interesting club activities is visiting students at schools to help them boost their motivation and performances in both academic and character. For example, the club has done two series of knowledge transfer programme with "learn while

playing” as the concept that involves three primary schools in Chenor, Pahang, Sekolah Kebangsaan Sekara, Sekolah Kebangsaan Bukit Bota and Sekolah Kebangsaan Bukit Lada. This programme which focuses on improving English language and Science has recorded 200 students from the schools as participants.

One of the objectives of this programme is to inspire primary students to learn English and Science and to enhance their leadership and communication skills. UPM students have prepared modules as well as became facilitators that handle the programme successfully.

Donations from the volunteers from the club has also achieved acknowledgement from the Malaysian Universities Volunteer Council (MASKUM). For the 2022/2023 session, the president of Human Development Club



200 participants from SK Sekara, SK Bukit Lada and SK Bukit Bota for Student Personality Empowerment Program which focus on English, Science, Leadership and Communication skills.

(INSAN), Mohamad Hazrisham bin Ab Rahman received the “Outstanding Volunteer Special Award 2022” from MASKUM, Student Volunteers Foundation (YSS) and Family Student Welfare Foundation (YKS).



Media coverage for Student Personality Empowerment Program conducted by The Human Development Club (INSAN) in Chenor, Pahang.

Flood Relief Mission

The UPM community especially students are always involved in flood relief missions in flood prone states such as Kelantan, Terengganu, Johor, Pahang and Kedah.

This flood relief mission is coordinated through the MASKUM which consists of representatives from public universities. At UPM, the Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP) has been appointed as the Secretariat of the Flood Humanitarian Relief Mission Steering Committee.

Some of the missions that have been successfully carried out with UPM students active involvement as volunteers are Flood Relief Mission in Alor Gajah, Melaka, Baling, Kedah, Bachok, Rantau Panjang dan Tumpat in Kelantan as well as Hulu Besut in Terengganu.



Mohamad Hazrisham (third from right) received the “Outstanding Volunteer Special Award 2022” for outstanding contribution in volunteerism field.



the elements of soft skills in themselves.

Through volunteering activities, students will be able to heighten their sense of love, the culture of helping others, the sense of caring and being attentive to the problems that befall others. Thus, well-mannered and selfless graduates are produced.

A group of student representatives from different student associations and clubs along with uniformed units like Kelab Insan, The Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), Police Undergraduate Voluntary Corps (Kor SUKSIS) and Civil Defense Undergraduate Cadet Corps (Kor SISPA) have stepped forward and joined all the missions to do the volunteering activities in order to help the victims.

Strengthening Soft Skills among Students through Volunteering Activities

Soft skills are generic skills that are required in various learning domains including aspects of personality and group work. Seven soft skills that need to be engraved in students are communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, teamwork, continuous learning, info management, entrepreneurship, moral and professional ethic and leadership.

Future Alumni are Successors to the Cultural Legacy of Devoting to the Community

Volunteerism that has been engraved in every student throughout their time on campus will be able to make them appreciate and continue to be involved in community works as well as relief missions after graduation and being an alumni.

The UPM volunteers help the flood victims by distributing donations in the form of finance, purchases of food and clothes as well as cleaning the affected flood houses and premises. Through this flood relief mission, not only students get to lend their hands to help the victims, they also get to nurture love and affection in them together with the sense of helping each other, thus becoming a caring and responsible citizen.

Soft skills are essential assets needed to produce ambitious graduates that can thrive in the job market as strong citizens with a solid sense of identity. Hence, universities are responsible to develop soft skills in every future graduate through Credited Co-curriculum Courses (KKB) and the organization of various activities according to their respective core.

Volunteering activities involved during their student days will empower them to continue the spirit of helping the society and targeted groups that are in need of help.

Student Volunteer for Flood Relief Mission from various background are helping the community affected by flood



As an example, students who are involved in volunteering activities will go through the experience of brainstorming ideas, forming the organizational structure, writing and presenting proposals as well as organizing the activities that have been planned. Through this process students will gain the competency needed as the knowledge and additional skills obtained will become useful assets when they enter the world of workforce after graduation.

This shows that the culture of helping others through volunteering activities have a very great impact on students, alumni and the society. Therefore, UPM students and alumni are expected to keep the spirit of volunteerism burning bright in accordance with the motto "With Knowledge, We Serve".

Conclusion

Generally, volunteering activities need students to interact a lot with various parties and organize multiple activities with honesty without hoping for any reward. This will give them space and significant opportunity to improve

The spirit of volunteerism in every student continues to empower the contribution and successful legacy of UPM to the society's welfare and country's development. UPM students together with alumni have great capability in conducting even more volunteering activities. In this context, UPM is playing a big role in producing future generations that serve the society and country with a sense of empathy, caring and instinct to help others.

Contributions

Giving Back to *Alma Mater* through **TAKWA'75**

Writer: Normah binti Ibrahim (UPM'75), Kamalur Rahman bin Ibrahim (UPM'75)
and Ab Rahim bin Hassan (UPM'74)

Celebrating the Success Story

On August 26, 2023, Alumni UPM Kelas '75 organised a luncheon that was held at Astana Putra, UPM, Serdang dubbed as "*Majlis Apresiasi dan Kesyukuran Tamat Pengajian Kumpulan Pelajar TAKWA'75 (Tabung Amal Kebajikan Warga Alumni '75)*".

This event was held with the aim to honour and appreciate the contributions of the donors who have assisted the TAKWA'75-sponsored students with monthly pocket money.

Apart from that, this event was also held to express gratitude for the success of all TAKWA'75 students who have successfully completed their studies. Some of them even received the Dean's Awards.

A total of 40 invited guests were present including four TAKWA'75 students. The ceremony started with prayer recitation, speeches, video presentation and finally followed with lunch.



During this event, the Chairman of TAKWA'75 presented the final disbursement of the financial assistance to the last sponsored TAKWA'75 student, Fatin Nur Syazierra binti Sahril. She had actually completed her studies in the Second Semester Session of Academic Year 2022/23 and completed Intern Programme on 16 August 2023.

With that symbolic payment, TAKWA'75 had paid out a total of RM112,200.00 to assist twenty students worth RM1,200.00 for every semester.

How it All Began

Five years after the establishment of UPM Alumni Association 1975 or also known as Alumni UPM Kelas'75, TAKWA'75 was set-up under its wing as the platform for welfare and charity-related activities. The setting-up of TAKWA'75 was meant to be an avenue for Association Members and/or Warga Kelas'75 in general, to be involved in welfare works.

TAKWA'75 was officially launched on May 9, 2017 by YBhg Tan Sri Mohd Nor Ismail (Allahyarham), former Deputy Vice Chancellor UPM (1975-1987), in conjunction with the Fourth Annual General Meeting of Alumni UPM Kelas'75.

The Set Up and Objectives

With this initiative, TAKWA'75 began to take steps to carry out welfare works where appropriate. Donations from association members and other UPM Alumni and members of public were collected and channelled to target groups that had been identified.

Subsequently, TAKWA'75 was alerted to looking at UPM students who were categorised as "Asnaf - (poor students)" by WAZAN (*Pusat Pengurusan Wakaf, Zakat dan Endowmen UPM*). These "asnaf" students were in needs of financial assistance as their "study loan money" was not enough to cover their daily food expenses after paying their academic-related fees. Hence, the formation of a specific team to manage the fund raising and disbursing activities.



TAKWA'75 (Asnaf Students Fund)

In order to facilitate the fund management and disbursement to selected students, a special team was established and known as TAKWA'75 (Asnaf Students Fund) with the following Committee Members:

- Advisor:** Dr Ibrahim Mohamed (Chairman of Alumni UPM Kelas'75)
- Chairman:** Hj Kamalur Rahman Ibrahim
- Secretary:** Hjh Masitah Arsad (until 5 October 2019) (deceased)
Hjh Normah Ibrahim (from 22 November 2019)
- Treasurer:** Hj Kamarudin Ab Rahman
- Committee Members:**
Hj Abd Aziz Abu Bakar (until 25th November 2021)
Hj Md Ridzuan Md Taib
Hj. Abu Hassan Osman (from 25th November 2021)



Purchase of a laptop urgently required for on-line lessons during Covid-19 pandemic.



Lunch at Tareem Restaurant, Serdang to celebrate TAKWA'75 Students who had completed their studies.



One of the students received the Best Cadet Award in 2019 (Syed Abd Rahman Syed Mohd Burhanuddin)

Other Contributions to TAKWA'75 Students

Beside financial assistance as mentioned above, these sponsored students were also given other assistance. These include Hari Raya Aidilfitri allowance, Special Achievement Reward (certain recognised activities), Special Allowance (for purchasing of books and laptops and participating in academic-related courses or events). TAKWA'75 Committee members had also spent time to visit sick students in hospital and settled academic fees-in-arrears due to unforeseen circumstances.

Guidance and Monitoring

To ensure students achieved good academic performance, their academic results were monitored by the TAKWA'75 Committee Members every semester and they were provided with the necessary guidance and advice to further improve their grades whenever required.

Meetings between TAKWA 75 Committee Members and TAKWA'75 Students were also held on several occasions with the aims of maintaining close rapport with them and at the same time handing-over of their monthly pocket money or other financial aids, wherever appropriate.



Students Attending Iftar Ramadan 2019 Co-Organised by PAUPM and Economic and Management Faculty



BIOCHAR

a Sustainable Solution for Food Security Waste Management and Economic Development of Malaysia

Writer: Hachib Mohammad Tusar,
Doctoral Research Fellow,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Food scarcity is a complex issue that affects millions of people all over the world. There are several factors that contribute to food scarcity including climate change, natural disasters, conflict and political instability, poverty and economic inequality. To reduce food scarcity there needs to be a coordinated effort to tackle the root causes of the problem. This can include investing in sustainable agriculture, supporting small scale farmers and promoting economic development to decrease poverty.

Food security is a major issue. Although there have been noticeable advances in agricultural practices after World War II, the global food supply is yet inadequate to meet the actual demands. In particular, industrialization since the 1850s has generated a variety of industrial wastes which deteriorated soil quality and agricultural productivity. The world's climate is gradually changing. The world is affected by various disaster like cyclone, flood, drought or salinity due to climate change. One of the major factors is greenhouse gas emission. The heat generated by sunlight cannot escape from the Earth because of

green house gas and the result is global warming. Carbon dioxide gas is one of the components of greenhouse gas. According to a study by Cornell University in the United States, the amount of carbon dioxide that trees absorb from the atmosphere releases the same amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere after a certain period of time. So, planting trees is not only the solution to reduce global warming. Cornell University researchers suggested an alternative for controlling global warming. This involves bringing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere into the plants and converting that carbon using the

pyrolysis process and applying it to the soil. The carbon produced in the pyrolysis process is called biochar.

Biochar is a revolutionary agriculture technology for preventing global warming, which is a huge opportunity for quality agriculture and natural balance. Of all the technologies available for climate change mitigation, Biochar is perhaps the simplest and most sustainable. In addition to preventing carbon dioxide emissions, biochar-rich nitrogen fertilizers have already been proven to be successful. Biochar-enriched nitrogen fertilizers are more effective than normal urea fertilizers. In fact, 70% of the nitrogen fertilizers applied to crops loses through air and environment. By using this nitrogen fertilizer rich in biochar, economic pressure will be reduced (as in annual subsidy) and at the same time import dependence can also be greatly reduced. Biochar produced from

organic materials such as rice husk, wood powder, waste materials etc is gaining attention as a potential solution to mitigate food security challenges around the world. It can also reduce soil acidity which is a major problem for growing crops in Malaysia.

The biochar process is quite simple. Biomass as the feedstock is put in the pyrolysis reactor with specific heating and gas flow rate, residence time, and temperature.



Biochar production kiln at Patuakhali Science and Technology University Bangladesh

sequestration, locking it away for centuries or even millennia. It helps mitigate climate change by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Biochar directly changes the physical and chemical properties of soil and consequently the microorganism activity which in turn, can influence the physical and chemical properties of the soil. The abundant and varying pores structures of biochar are retained after it is applied. A mass of micro-pores is formed, providing spaces for microbe growth and propagation and protecting microbes from an unfavourable external environment, thus reducing the survival competition amongst microbes. There are nutrients required by various microbes for their growth and development in the micro-pores of biochar.



Biochar

by plastic, paper, mixed organic, wood, and others. The amount of garbage thrown away has risen steadily in Malaysia with the nation's population growth, and most of the waste has gone into landfills. With limited space for landfills and rising costs of disposal, there is increased pressure and urgent need to tackle the waste management issue and reduce the impact on the environment and general well-being of the population. Local environmental experts have forecasted no space will be available by 2050 if nothing is done to reduce waste. The inadequate waste management and lack of proper waste disposal mechanisms have resulted in the pollution of rivers, soil and groundwater. The accumulation of waste has also led to the spread of diseases and the proliferation of rats and mosquitoes.

Biochar can be used in waste management by converting organic waste into a stable carbon form, creating a valuable soil amendment. One of the major economic benefits of biochar is its potential to increase agricultural productivity and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers. It also helps lower the input costs for farmers. Biochar can also be used as a renewable energy source. It can be burn in power plants to generate electricity or used as a fuel for heating homes and buildings.

The by-products such as gas and bio-oil have economic values. Biochar has numerous benefits for soil health and crop production, which could help to increase crop yields and improve food security in regions with poor soil quality. One of the key benefits of biochar is its ability to improve soil fertility and water retention. When added to soil, biochar acts like a sponge, absorbing water and nutrients and releasing them slowly over time. Biochar helps to prevent soil erosion and nutrient loss, and improve soil structure and porosity, which in turn enhance root growth and nutrient uptake by plants. It reduces greenhouse gas emission. Biochar increases carbon

In terms of production cost, biochar can be relatively low-cost compared to other organic fertilizers. The production of biochar can be carried out using simple equipment and can be done on a small scale, making it accessible to farmers. The cost of biomass feedstock, such as agricultural waste or wood chips are often abundant and affordable. Waste management is a significant problem in Malaysia as waste output overtake the country's recycling rate. Malaysia disposes of more than 30,000 tons of municipal solid waste daily. This is alarming. Food waste contributed the most significant component of municipal solid waste, followed

Despite the rapid industrialization of Malaysia, the agriculture sector remains one of the major economic contributors. Important crops that contribute to the economy of Malaysia include oil palm, rubber, short rotation forestry and paddy. Biomass has always been used for the upstream generation of steam and power at the milling and primary processing stage in Malaysia. The production and utilization of biochar from agro-based biomass is one of the major research areas in Malaysian universities and research

Contributions

institutions. The biomass sector in Malaysia has the potential to satisfy the three key pillars of sustainable development, that is environment, business and social benefits. The use of biochar in the urban landscape and green building sector is also being explored as it has been successfully applied for tropical rooftop greening as far back as 2004.

By realizing the effectiveness of biochar, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has provided a fund for research on biochar-based fertilizer development. The research is conducted under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Md Kamal Uddin, Dr. Susilawati Kasem and Dr. Samsuri Abd Wahid. Similar research is also being carried out by various institutions headed by UPM including the Nasmeh Technology which has successfully built the first large scale biochar production plant in the region. For biochar research and sustainable crop production, UPM; IPB University, Indonesia; University Malaya; University of Western Australia; Universiti Sumatera Utara (USU) Indonesia; Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) Bangladesh; Fatoni University Thailand; University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka; and the University of Aden, Republic of Yemen recently formed a research organization namely International Collaboration for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture (ICFSA). One of the important objectives of this organization is to work on biochar research development all over the world.

Biochar Association Malaysia (BMA) was established in 2014. The missions of BMA are to promote the biochar production and application in both agricultural and industrial sectors, to promote awareness on the role of biochar as a carbon sequester, and as a platform for idea and information exchange in promoting the biochar industry in Malaysia.



Biochar application on soil can be economically feasible if the market price of biochar is low enough so that a farmer can earn a profit after applying biochar to the crop field. In under-developed rural areas of low-income countries, adding biochar to the poor and often unproductive soils resulted in great economic impact. In Malaysia, although labor and other costs are higher, increased crop yield achieved by biochar application has high economic value. It is clear that labor costs are especially important factors in the determination of whether biochar is profitable or not.

Even though there have been promising findings on biochar application globally, there is still an existing gap in the knowledge of farmers who are end users of biochar. There is a contrasting practical application as well as the level of interest by farmers and other stakeholders such as environmental managers and

policymakers on the global scale. Nearly 90% produced biochar in regions like Europe, plays an important role in agro environmental activities including livestock husbandry, crop production and modulation of the environment, the case is different in most of developing countries. The woody-based biomass is heavily utilized in charcoal production as a source of fuel while the agro-industrial by-products from processing industries are less recycled to produce value added materials including biochar. There is misapprehension by farmers that all biochars are of the same physicochemical characteristics. This hence calls for necessary practical initiatives such as an establishment of best-use biochar application protocols and programs in educating farmers through extension and livestock field officers.

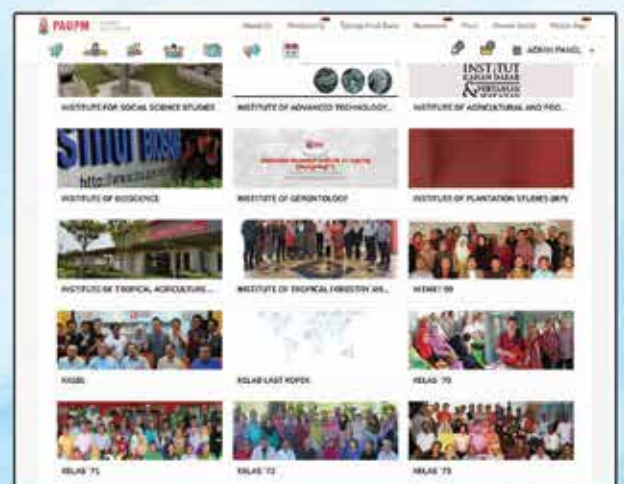
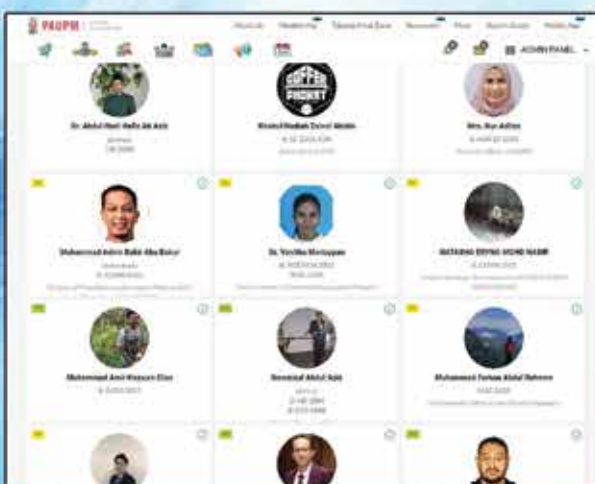
It is hoped that biochar based biofertilizer will be more useful for increasing agricultural production in Malaysia. It is anticipated that the Malaysia Government will undertake additional initiatives to promote biochar production. This may involve the development of a national policy, support for biochar research and development, establishment of biochar production infrastructure, heightened awareness campaigns, and the integration of biochar into national climate change strategies. By implementing these strategies, the government can promote the use of biochar which can increase crop productivity and enhance sustainable economic development all over the country.



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- ▶ Can view our registered Alumni on geo map
- ▶ Stay connected with UPM and fellow Alumni
- ▶ Get up to date news of PAUPM and UPM activities



Contributions

Mandi Embun: Reigniting Malaysia's Forgotten Art of Forest Therapy

Writer: Dr. Keeren Sundara Rajoo
(Alumni Class 2012, 2014 & 2018)

Forest Therapy: From Japan to a Global Phenomenon

Forest therapy entails immersing oneself in natural environments to improve physical and mental well-being. Developed in Japan during the 1980s, where it is lovingly known as *Shinrin-yoku*, it has since gained global recognition and inspired several countries to embrace the practice. Forest therapy promotes relaxation, stress reduction, and connection with nature, leading to enhanced overall health. In Japan, forest therapy has been established as a national health program, with certified forest therapy bases and millions of people participating in forest walks annually. Similarly, in the United States, the concept of nature prescriptions is gaining momentum, with doctors now prescribing time in parks and nature for various physical and mental health issues. Echoing this, Australia has also embraced the concept of nature-based interventions, with initiatives like *Healthy Parks Healthy People* promoting the health and well-being benefits of exposure to nature.

South Korea has invested heavily in forest bathing, establishing a National Forest Healing Centre and is planning to develop more "healing forests" across the country. Finland, known for its abundant boreal forests, has conducted numerous studies on the benefits of natural environments, with recommendations of spending at least five hours a month in nature to gain health benefits. Neighbouring Sweden has successfully implemented horticultural therapy programs and prioritizes outdoor learning and nature schools.

deep spiritual significance for various communities, none more so than the *Orang Asli*, Malaysia's indigenous people. With their deep-rooted connection to the forests, the *Orang Asli* can provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of Forest therapy in the Malaysian context.

The traditional Malaysian practice of *Mandi Embun*, loosely translated as "bathing in forest dew," holds profound spiritual and physical significance among the indigenous *Orang Asli* community.

Official Recognition on the Positive Role Forests Play to Human Health

On 21 May 2023, coinciding with the International Day of Forests, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) unveiled its report titled "**Forests and Trees for Human Health**". The Global Forest Expert Panel (GFEP) was tasked with developing the report, by assessing the scientific information on the linkages between forests, trees outside forests, and green spaces with



The traditional Malaysian practice of Mandi Embun, loosely translated as "bathing in forest dew," holds profound spiritual and physical significance among the indigenous Orang Asli community.

These examples highlight the global recognition of the therapeutic benefits of forests and nature. Governments, organizations, and individuals around the world are increasingly incorporating forest therapy into their health and wellness practices, aiming to address mental health issues, reduce stress, and promote overall well-being through the healing power of nature. Despite this growing global popularity, Forest therapy remains largely absent in Malaysia. Which is rather shocking, considering that Malaysia might have historically practiced its own version of forest therapy for centuries.

Unveiling *Mandi Embun*

Forests have always played an important role in Malaysian lives, maintaining a significant role culturally, economically, and socially in the country and its people. Moreover, forests hold

They believed that by walking barefooted in forests, usually early in the morning, it would improve spiritual and physical health. The belief was that during the break of dawn, the "spiritual energy" of the forest would be transferred to the forest dew via evaporation, and that this "spiritual energy" would be transferred to anyone who comes in contact with the forest dew. This belief also resonated among ancient *silat* (the art of self-defence) practitioners, with folktales even recounting stories of ancient Malay warriors performing the practice.

Although the belief that forest dew transfers the "spiritual energy" of the forest to individuals lacks scientific merit, *Mandi Embun* can be seen as an indigenous form of Forest therapy. Interestingly, there appears to be some mention of the practice in social media, yet awareness regarding this practice is still limited.

human health. The GFEP's findings strongly support a wide range of health benefits associated with forests. These include neurodevelopment in children, mental well-being in adults, cognitive aging and longevity in the elderly, spiritual well-being, and the vital role of forests in traditional medicine including as a form of ecotherapy.

The availability of green spaces, especially forests, was found to have a significant impact on human health. Access to green spaces promotes physical activity, reduces stress, improves immune function, and enhances mental health. The tranquillity and restoration offered by green spaces provide a respite from the demands and stressors of urban life. Additionally, forests contribute to social interactions, community cohesion, and spiritual well-being, fostering a sense of connection with something greater than oneself.

Contributions

The report reaffirms the core believe of forest therapy; Exposure to natural settings can be highly beneficial to both physical and mental wellbeing. And the benefits go beyond that, extending to the cultural, social, and ecological dimensions of human life. Forest therapy recognizes the intrinsic value of forests and their ability to nourish and heal not only individual but also communities and the planet as a whole.

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) at the Forefront of Revitalizing Mandi Embun

Recognizing the potential of forest therapy, UPM is wholeheartedly into researching, developing and promoting forest therapy in Malaysia. Led by Dr. Keeren Sundara Rajoo, UPM has conducted several studies pertaining to forest therapy, including its potential in reducing academic stress, improving cognitive performances and managing negative emotions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These studies not

only represent some of the earliest forest therapy researches conducted in Malaysia but also in Southeast Asia.

This year, in collaboration with the Kelantan State Forestry Department (KSFD), UPM is spearheading the development of forest therapy modules and trails in Kelantan. These initiatives mark the first state-backed forest therapy trails in Malaysia, hopefully, the first of many.

The collaboration aims to integrate traditional knowledge, scientific research and practical applications in developing forest therapy modules and trails. Most interestingly, it will incorporate *Senaman Melayu Tua*, religious and spiritual elements, mirroring the unique aspects of *Mandi Embun*. This will be the first forest therapy program in the world to incorporate these elements. The modules will be designed to cater to a wide range of individuals, offering different activities and experiences within the forest environment based on their expectations and needs. By combining the rich cultural heritage of *Mandi Embun* with evidence-based research on the benefits of forest therapy, these initiatives aim to reignite Malaysia's forgotten art of forest therapy while promoting the well-being of its citizens in a cost-effective manner.

The Future of Forest Therapy in Malaysia

Forest therapy has a promising future in Malaysia, as it offers a multitude of opportunities to enhance public health and well-being. By acknowledging the potential benefits of forest environments and integrating them into healthcare practices, Malaysia can tap into the healing power of nature to complement

existing treatments and preventive measures. The incorporation of forest therapy into wellness programs, mental health treatments, and rehabilitation initiatives can significantly contribute to improving overall health outcomes.

In addition to its impact on healthcare, the development of forest therapy modules and trails can serve as a catalyst for ecotourism in Malaysia. By attracting both domestic and international visitors, forest therapy tourism can generate revenue, create job opportunities, and promote sustainable practices. The integration of forest therapy into Malaysia's healthcare system not only benefits individual well-being but also has the potential to reshape societal perspectives on engaging with nature for holistic wellness.

As the world recognizes the immense benefits of forest therapy, Malaysia should capitalize on the practice for the wellbeing of its people and to develop its own ecotourism. The country's rich cultural heritage, particularly the spiritual bond between Malaysians and nature, provides a strong foundation for implementing forest therapy. The collaborative efforts between Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Kelantan State Forestry Department signify a significant step toward revitalizing Malaysia's forgotten art of forest therapy. By combining traditional practices like *Mandi Embun* with scientific research, Malaysia can harness the healing potential of its forests and promote a healthier, more balanced society for future generations.

Dr. Keeren Sundara Rajoo is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Forestry Science, Faculty of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, UPMKB, Bintulu, Sarawak, Malaysia.



"Mandi Embun" activities can relieve stress and avoid negative thoughts

UPM is an Inclusive Campus for Persons with Disabilities

Writer: Marlinah Muslim (Alumni Class 2009)
Head of the UPM Disability Services and Support Unit,
Student Affairs Division

Introduction

The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Malaysia announced the Guidelines for Implementing Person with Disability (PWD) Inclusive Policy in 2019, guiding higher learning institutions to manage the affairs of persons with disabilities. The policy includes strategic planning, establishment of PWD Services Units, safety and health management, disability counseling, industrial training, employment opportunities, health management, social support, and volunteerism. Implementing the PWD Inclusive Campus is challenging due to students with disabilities coming from various educational backgrounds, including Special Education Schools and Vocational Schools for Disabled. Factors such as social, academic, and infrastructure must be considered to ensure inclusivity and support for students with disabilities.

Inclusiveness in Sustainable Development

As a global institution, UPM promotes global Sustainable Development implementation, and the campus' success is possible due to its focus on social inclusion, economic aspects, and disability. The UN's Sustainable



Disabled (OKU) students in UPM during the celebration of OKU Day by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

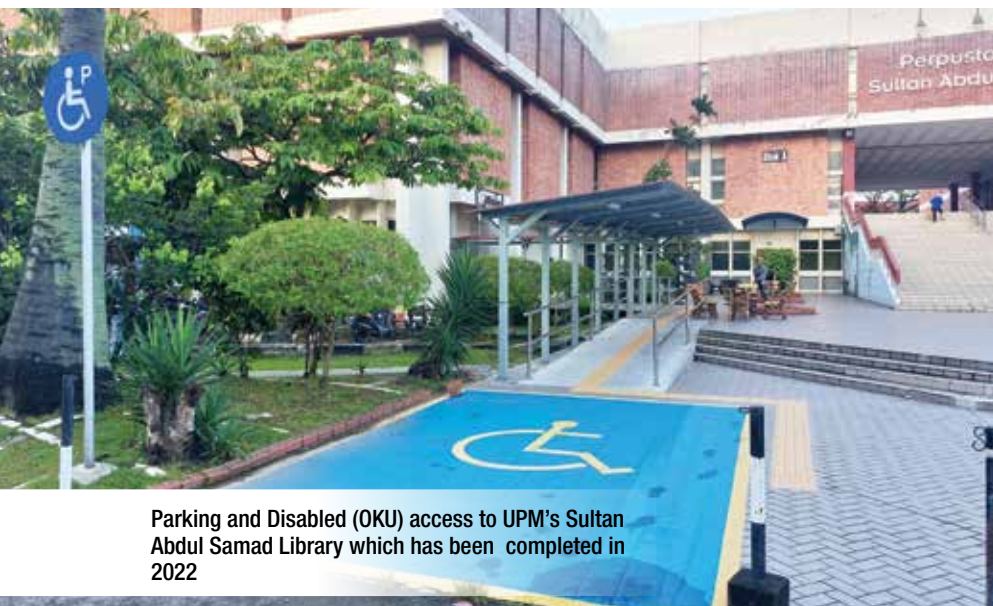
Development Goals (SDG) emphasise social inclusion in SDG 10 and disability in SDGs 4, 8, 11, and 17.

The term "inclusive" gained popularity after the United Nations began using it in its Sustainable Development Goals since 2015. Inclusion aims to improve participation for disadvantaged individuals, including those with disabilities, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, and respect for rights. Disability inclusion involves including people with disabilities in everyday

activities and encouraging them to take on roles like their non-disabled counterparts.

Inclusive education defined by Emeritus Professors Judy Sebba and Mel Ainscow in 1996, focuses on responding to all students as individuals by examining curriculum management. In 2012, Professor Lani Florian defined inclusiveness as allowing people with disabilities to fully participate in all community activities, including education, occupational, recreational, and domestic activities. Malaysian disability

Campus Portraits



Parking and Disabled (OKU) access to UPM's Sultan Abdul Samad Library which has been completed in 2022

experts and UN participants are familiar with inclusiveness. However, it is crucial to educate the public about inclusiveness to align with the original definitions and objectives enumerated by the experts.

Implementation of PWD Inclusive Campus

The PWD Inclusive Campus must be carefully planned and adhered to MOHE's PWD Inclusive Campus Policy Implementation Guidelines. UPM should have its own strategic plan to avoid mismanagement and misunderstood actions, such as installing only a few universal design buildings and locating the entire PWD community in one building for security monitoring. This can lead to exclusion and discrimination against PWD.

Social inclusiveness aims to achieve sustainable development by increasing participation of people with disabilities in communities without discrimination. Implementing social inclusiveness in higher learning institutions should align with the idea that students with disabilities should be able to participate in the same activities as other students, preparing for the world after graduation and competing for employment.

There may be some who are concerned that this concept of inclusive is inhumane and will be inconvenient for the PWD but this assumption is completely false as it is unreasonable to isolate the PWD from the rest of society. Thus, UPM took immediate action by establishing the UPM PWD Inclusive Policy, which will be approved by the Board of Directors of Universiti Putra Malaysia in September 2020.

The Challenges in Implementing PWD Inclusive Campus

The first challenge that UPM faces is the increasing number of new students enrolling each year since 2018. Therefore, comprehensive preparations should be made so that UPM can accommodate their requirements while they are on campus without discrimination based on their disability.

During pre-school, primary and secondary school, some PWD students attend special education schools, however, at the university level, they will be in the same class as other stream students and will soon compete for employment upon graduation. In such a situation, UPM's second challenge is designing a campus that is fully accessible to people with disabilities.

The third challenge will involve preparing the university as a place where students can develop their potential without any form of discrimination and barriers to any activity. This must include infrastructure support, academic support, curriculum, security and a socially inclusive environment.

According to the Department of Social Welfare, there are seven (7) categories of disability in Malaysia, and within these categories there are additional varieties of disability conditions. Therefore, it is not surprising that social and academic support for the development of PWD facilities is requires high



costs and specialised knowledge. Support for the disability is not just enough to provide a special needs route for wheelchair user and the blind but it is mandatory to give any support as stated in the Act 685 (Persons with Disabilities Act 2008). Complying with all of Act 685 requirements is a major challenge among to all other challenges to achieve social inclusion in the campus.

Being aware of the challenges mentioned earlier, as one of responsible person in the UPM Disability Services and Support Unit to take various precautions to manage the difficulties. The most important thing is critically analyse every situation in order to meet MOHE's needs and advance the UPM's goal.

This initiative is a team effort, involving university administrators, experts, lecturers, and coordinators of the OKU Disability Services and Support Unit. Their assistance and guidance are crucial in creating an inclusive campus for PWD.

UPM’s Efforts Towards a Fully Inclusive Campus for People with Disabilities

The PWD Inclusive Campus has been achieved through various efforts, including the establishment of the PWD Services and Support Unit (UPSO) in November 2019 and the PWD Inclusive Policy on September 8, 2020 which was signed by YAM Tengku Syarif Laksamana Perlis Dato’ Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Syed Putra Jamalullail. The Student Affairs Division is responsible for administering affairs for PWD at the university and formulating the Inclusive Policy for disability, which serves as the foundation for the action plan.

The Student Affairs Division drafted an action plan for the PWD Inclusive Campus, approved by the University Management Committee (JPU) 2020. The plan includes the operation of the PWD Services and Support Unit, MyU-OKU Self-Audit, coordinator appointments, PWD Inclusive Policy and Guidelines, a website and database for UPM Inclusive Campus, Disability Student Association activation, and awareness campaigns. These initiatives have been implemented within four years, with the PWD Inclusive Campus Implementation Guidelines for UPM approved by JPU in 2022.

In addition to the aforementioned plan, the *Putra Buddies* initiative which was created by the UPM Student Affairs Division and the UPM Student Representative Council and approved by JPU in 2021 encourages student volunteerism to assist friends with disabilities. In order to sustain the PWD inclusive campus awareness

campaign at UPM, the UPM Vice-Chancellor decided to mark December every year, **beginning in December 2020 as the UPM PWD Inclusive Campus Awareness Month**. Since 2020, more than 20 online and in-person awareness campaigns have been conducted along with annual *Disability Equality Training* for UPM staff.

UPM has presented a proposal to the MOHE for a small-scale project to upgrade government buildings to OKU-friendly buildings. The UPSO has secured RM1 million to upgrade the OKU-friendly infrastructure surrounding the UPM campus. This initiative is a collaboration between the UPM Bursar Office, Student Affairs Division, Development Office and Asset Management (PPPA). PPPA and the Bursar’s Office oversee the project’s implementation and progression, while UPSO ensures universal design is incorporated and meets the needs of persons with disabilities in identified buildings.

The Centre for Management of Waqf, Zakat, and Endowment (WAZAN) was also contributing RM75,000.00 to convert student rooms in identified residential colleges into PWD-friendly rooms. WAZAN has also engaged UPSO at its discretion to determine which residential colleges have the potential to be upgraded. UPM Islamic Centre, all entities in Student and Alumni Affairs, Alumni Relation Centre UPM (ARCUPM), Sahabat Masjid, Faculty of Human Ecology, Faculty of Educational Studies, Faculty of Design and Architecture, Persatuan Keluarga Autisme UPM, OKU alumni and many more UPM entities are all involved in implementing the PWD Inclusive Campus agenda.

Even though the policy has been established and the action plan implemented, the process does not end there. Regularly implementing additional initiatives

and campaigns will raise campus-wide awareness of the significance of making UPM a genuinely inclusive campus for the PWD community.

The Importance of Awareness of the Right Inclusive Concept

It is crucial to educate the campus community about the PWD inclusive concept to prevent misunderstandings and negative responses. Misunderstandings can lead to inadequate management and barriers for the PWD community. Supporting the PWD inclusive campus by providing universal design facilities is not about granting exclusive privileges but maximizing inclusive initiatives.

The goal is to maximize life-achievement potential for the PWD community. With continued UPM efforts, the PWD-inclusive campus will be effectively implemented, and more individuals with disabilities will continue their education at universities, particularly UPM.



The disabled path in the Disabled (OKU) Student Complex which was completed in July 2023



The Disabled (OKU) path in the Student Residential College (KOSASS) which has been completed in 2022



YAYASAN PAK RASHID

Be perseverance, don't give up!

Writer: Siti Farhana Saludin
(Alumni Class 2015)



"Nothing special about me," said Dr. Normalia Samian, the recipient of Yayasan Pak Rashid Gold Medal Award, during the UPM Convocation Ceremony in 2006. She was born in Batu Pahat, Johor on December 20, 1979. Currently, she is a lecturer at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Her colourful life experience now defines who she is.

Her educational journey was not a smooth sailing one, as she had gone through some difficult decisions, such as choosing a path that was not in her best interest for the sake of her family's hopes. Prior to enrolling at UPM for her bachelor's degree, she endured a difficult education experience at another university, which resulted in a CGPA below her expectations. Determined not to graduate with such low CGPA, she made the drastic decision to restart her education with a diploma at a tertiary institution that collaborates with UPM.

Despite opposition from her family, she persisted in sticking to her decision. This is when her education started to flourish once more, as she was awarded the MARA scholarship and obtained a satisfactory CGPA. At this juncture, she began to pursue a first-class CGPA for her

bachelor's degree at UPM. Despite having to switch from Diploma in Engineering to Bachelor of Computer Science, she approached the challenge with an open mind, focusing on how to instill an "I love programming" mindset. Finally, she was awarded Yayasan Pak Rashid Gold Medal Award during her final semester of bachelor's study.

She also received Anugerah Kecemerlangan MARA and a full-funded scholarship funding for getting the first-class honours. She pursued her Master's degree at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) before completing her PhD at UPM. She gained variety of experiences during her student life in campus. One of her memorable

experiences was when she led the team as a Deputy Director in organizing a big program known as Open Week @FSKTM at the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology. The team was given the opportunity to interact with industry's representatives, in securing participants, exhibitors and getting sponsors. The Open Week @FSKTM program was shared with numerous well known industry players such as Celcom Malaysia and Telekom Malaysia™.

During her undergraduate studies in UPM, Dr. Normalia worked as a part-time demo/tutor especially at Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology and Faculty of Science (Department of Mathematics and Statistics) UPM. She also joins Megatech Corporate Training Centre which entrusted her with tutoring government officers in programming. After receiving her bachelor's degree, Dr. Normalia applied for positions as a tutor and an engineer at an industrial firm. She received a job offer as an engineer but is still awaiting for a response to her tutoring application. Allah S.W.T answered her prayers, and she was offered the position of tutor. Then, in her pursuit of achievement, she pursues a master's degree and a PhD to become an academician.

One memorable question prompted to her by Dr. Rohani Ibrahim from YPR Secretariat during her phone conversation interview for YPR Gold Medal Award was "What distinguishes you from other students?". Dr. Normalia responded that there was nothing distinctive about her compared to other students, but she acknowledged that she has a character that not give up readily in the face of adversity. She believes that every occurrence in existence must have a purpose.



A family portrait of PhD convocation 2018 together with husband

Dr. Normalia has her own way of dealing with stress. Besides spiritual exercises, she normally will take up travelling and shopping to relieve tension. Dr. Normalia wishes to share to her fellow alumni her character how her perseverance, resilience and refusal to quit have contributed to her current success. Obviously, spiritual exercises and practices will determine the outcome.

“ She also received Anugerah Kecemerlangan MARA and a full-funded scholarship funding for getting the first-class honours. She pursued her Master's degree at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) before completing her PhD at UPM. ”

With the organizing committee members of IEEE LCN 2016 conference in Dubai



Winning the award of N2 Women Young Researcher Fellowship in 2016



“Enjoy the little things in life”

Writer: Siti Farhana Saludin
(Alumni Class 2015)



Ong Min Li earned her Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Community Health at UPM before enrolling in an Master in Business Administration (MBA) program at the University of Wales. She was born in 1988, and she is currently employed as a Medical Field Force Effectiveness Specialist at Nestle Malaysia. Being a Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (JPA) scholarship recipient has allowed her to excel in both academics and extracurriculars. In 2012, during her convocation day, she was awarded the UPM Alumni Gold Medal, which kickstarted her to dream big, push past boundaries, and achieve more in life.

Min Li was an active student, participating in annual nutrition conferences and research symposiums. Additionally, she took on leadership roles such as Head of Block B in the Student Supreme Council (Majlis Tertinggi Mahasiswa Kolej 17). As she was deeply committed to community service and outreach, she led a food drive to collect 111 kg of rice and other food supplies to help refugees living in Malaysia in cooperation with the Golden Key International Honour Society. For Min Li, interacting with the malnourished refugees in the urban slums and the underprivileged old folks in the villages awakened a sense of compassion within herself. The opportunity to give back, to offer nourishment, education, and support to those in need, became a life-changing impetus. Witnessing the impact of our efforts, the gratitude in their eyes, and the resilience of the human spirit left an indelible mark on Min Li soul.

She pursued her education in a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Community Health due to her interest in food, health, and a desire to make a positive influence on individuals and communities. Her main goals are to promote people's health and well-being. When asked about her fondest memories at UPM, she mentioned enjoying participating in and organizing numerous extracurricular events alongside the student committees. These events included faculty dinners, Raya festivities, cultural nights, health fairs, and Chinese debates. It was through these activities that she got to know her husband a student of Biomedical Science that graduated same year with her.

Life and Career Journey

After graduating from UPM, Min Li embarked as a Nutrition Executive based in Ipoh for six years. After getting married and moving to Kuala Lumpur, she ventured into the pharmaceutical industry. Although it was a completely different environment for her, she embraced the challenge and quickly adapted to the medical and pharmaceutical ecosystem. After her first baby was born, a remarkable opportunity rose where she became a Medical Field Force Effectiveness Specialist. This role involved reviewing the effectiveness and performance of medical field team through IT tools, advanced analytics, assessments, and continuous feedback.

To deal with stress, Min Li said she first tried talking and sharing her feeling and concern with people she trusts such as friends, family members and mentor. Her main motivator to be successful is undoubtedly her family, having them as her biggest support system and guiding force throughout her life. Additionally,

she tried to engage in activities that can help relax and bring joy, such as taking a walk in nature, practicing mindfulness, and pursuing a hobby. Furthermore, she used to write down anything unfinished on a piece of paper. This allows her to organize them and prioritize things that needed immediate attention. Lastly, she consciously tries calming her mind and body to let go of any stress before bed.

Min Li promoting Faculty Health Fair with Putra FM



maintaining perseverance, and seeking out a mentor. Min Li encourages a commitment to continuous learning and the pursuit of becoming the best version of oneself.

For current UPM students, Min Li encapsulates her advice in the '3D' approach: determination (translating words and dreams into action), discipline (establishing a routine and sticking to it), and decisiveness (prioritizing studies with conviction). She underscores the significance of striking a balance between academic pursuits and co-curricular activities, emphasizing that it involves making conscious choices and managing time effectively.

For Min Li, valuable ways alumni can contribute and make a difference for UPM as an alma mater is through sharing pride, providing guidance, supporting university initiatives, and expressing gratitude to the lecturers who shaped ours. By actively engaging with UPM and giving back in any form possible helps create a stronger alumni community and may contribute to the continued success of the university.

"This recognition served as a catalyst for my personal and professional growth. It inspired me to continue setting ambitious goals to pursue further academic and professional success. In terms of my career, winning the gold medal opened doors to numerous opportunities. Employers and educational institutions recognized the significance of this achievement, which bolstered my credibility and made me a desirable candidate" says Min Li.

Wise Words, Good Quotes

As an alumna, Min Li advises keeping an open mind and letting determination, not just your degree, define you. She emphasizes the importance of prioritizing what's truly important,



Graduation photo with housemate

The Journey of UPM: three Founding Faculties

Writer: Shahirah Alia Azahar

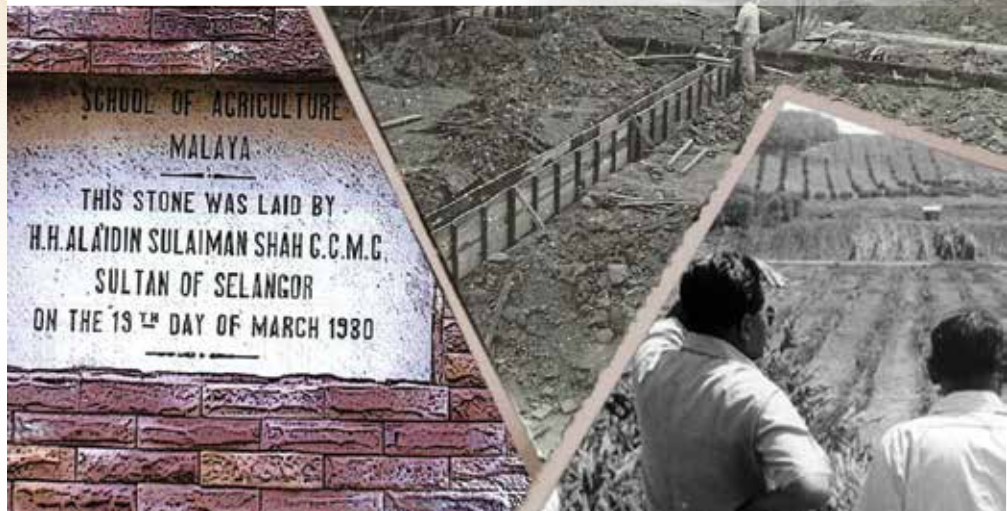
Introduction

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) is among the most known agricultural university campuses spanning over 3000 acres and is located on the Kuala Lumpur-Serdang highway close to the country's administrative capital, Putrajaya. It was established in 1971. The history begins with the idea to help the economic growth in Malaysia since the 2nd World War had ended. Now, UPM is among the leading research universities in Malaysia. There are three founding faculties in UPM, namely, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, and Faculty of Forestry. Based on the data collected in Alumni Information System (AIS) from 2002 until 2023, UPM already produces 158,432 alumni which include international students all around the world. UPM is one of the top public universities in Malaysia and ranked 158th in QS World University Rankings 2024 which is top 5 in Asia.

UPM started as a school of agriculture in 1931 and located on a 22-acre piece of land in Serdang. The 'debut' name of UPM was "School of Agriculture Malaya" since the main subject taught at the school was agricultural education. The opening and official declaration of the School of Agriculture Malaya were made on May 21, 1931 by John Scott, the Acting High Commissioner of Federated Malay States (FMS). That significant and memorable scene was held at a special ceremony which was

The founding stone of the School of Agriculture Malaya, 1930

Source: by book "From Seed to Towering Tree - The UPM Journey"



attended by the Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Selangor, Yang di-Pertuan Besar Negeri Sembilan, Raja Muda Perak and Undang Rembau. Also in attendance at this historic ceremony in Serdang were the Director of Agriculture and Principal of the School of Agriculture, Malaya.

At the School of Agriculture only two programmes were offered - a three-year diploma programme and one-year certificate course in Agriculture, but today there are more than sixty programmes offered in UPM. In 1947 there was a change of status from 'School of Agriculture' to 'College of Agriculture' by upgrading the programme in the college and offering more research and development in agriculture. The declaration of the College of Agriculture Malaya was done on 23 June 1947 by Sir Edward Gent, the then Governor of the Malayan Union. About 24 years later, the

Universiti Pertanian Malaysia was established when the College of Agriculture merged with the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Malaya (UM).

There were 1559 students who were the first intake of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia at the end of July 1973 when the first academic session started in the three founding faculties, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science and Faculty of Forestry. Within 50 years the advancement of programmes in Universiti Pertanian Malaysia contributed to the re-branded "Universiti Putra Malaysia" as a new phase of the institution. One of the reasons the re-branding happened was to fulfill UPM's Vision "to become a university of international repute". The declaration of the new name was made by Tun Mahathir Mohammad in April 1997 at the campus in Serdang.

Celebration for the First Born Alumni

On July 30, 1977, the first Convocation Ceremony was held for the first UPM graduates. During the Ceremony, Tuanku Canselor, Sultan Selangor, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, Tun Datu Mustapha (Pro Canselor) and Deputy Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad were present. The Convocation Ceremony is an official function of the University that is filled with excitement and circumstance that holds great significance for each student. It is a University event that awards academic degrees to individuals who have completed their studies. UPM has also made history by generating the most Ph.D graduates in Malaysia at the Public University Convocation. UPM once again demonstrated its seriousness in the field of research in 2010.

The first building in 1971

Source: by book "The Three Founding Faculties - Spurring the Glories of UPM"



First faculty's administration office in 2005

Source: by book "The Three Founding Faculties - Spurring the Glories of UPM"

Graduation is the formal recognition that students have completed their academic requirements and have been approved to complete the degree

of study. Convocation is the in-person ceremony where students receive their credential (degree, diploma, or certificate). Graduation is the administrative process that grants the degree; students must finish this process to formally obtain their degree. Convocation is the celebration of graduation. All students must complete their study to graduate, however attending convocation is optional.

The Founding Faculties of UPM: Faculty of Agriculture

In this edition of Serdang Sun, it focuses on the Faculty of Agriculture. The Faculty of Agriculture is one of three pioneer faculties that made up the establishment of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (currently Universiti Putra Malaysia) in 1971. Beginning with seven departments under this faculty, most of these departments were later developed to become several other faculties. At the end of 1998, the Faculty of Agriculture had 3 academic departments, namely, the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, Department of Plant Protection and Department of Soil Science.

From 1st January 1999 onwards, the restructuring was based on the concept of uniting or integration of the main elements in the agricultural systems comprising crops, animals, soil, technology and management. The Faculty of Agriculture now has 7 departments - Crop Science, Animal Science, Plant Protection, Land Management, Agribusiness and Information System, Agriculture Technology, Aquaculture.

As a foremost agriculture faculty in this country, Faculty of Agriculture plays a major role to find solutions to the current agriculture problems faced by the nation. It also plays a role to enhance the prospects of development of the agriculture industry especially in the training programmes of human resources so as to produce trained individuals comprising of graduates who are visionary and competitive in the industrial arena. Using the country's education system as the base, the Faculty of Agriculture will strive to produce trained agriculture expertise characterized by their entrepreneurship and capability to provide consultations at any place, besides contributing to new and high agriculture technology resulting from research and commercialization programmes.

The Faculty of Agriculture currently offers programmes in Bachelor of Agricultural Science, Bachelor of Horticultural Science, Bachelor of Science (Agribusiness), Bachelor of Agriculture (Aquaculture), Bachelor of Science (Plantation Management), Bachelor of Technology (Smart Agriculture) and Bachelor of Agriculture (Animal Science). Besides that, programmes at postgraduate levels are offered such as Master in Land Resource Management, Master in Plantation Management and Master in Tropical Soil Science. Based on the data from 2002 until 2023 there are around 10,598 alumni from the Faculty of Agriculture.

Faculty of Agriculture 2011

Source: by book "The Three Founding Faculties - Spurring the Glories of UPM"



*next faculty: Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

The Journey Founder Cultural Arts Society Zhong Hua UPM

Writer: Ng Kooi Wei (Alumni Class 2008) & Nabihah Syazwani Mohd Sokri



In 2011, I returned to my hometown in Sungai Petani, Kedah, to manage Madam Liong & Son Vacation & Conventions Sdn Bhd. I was active in promoting tourism in the Northern region. On my own initiative, I searched for and emailed Mr. Roslan, who is the Director of the Kedah State Tourism Promotion Board, to coordinate a meeting on how to promote and encourage tourism in the Northern region, specifically in Kedah.

The journey showcases significant growth and contributions in different areas, starting from university days at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) to the impactful work in tourism in Sungai Petani, Kedah. In 2004 at UPM, I actively participated in campus life, notably by organizing the Chinese New Year Festival, first in my college and later university-wide. The election in 2005 to the Student Representative Council (MPP) underscores my leadership and organizational skills.

After university in 2011, I returned to Sungai Petani and managed Madam Liong & Son Vacation & Conventions Sdn Bhd, focusing on boosting tourism in Kedah. I took the initiative to collaborate with the Kedah State Tourism Promotion Board, aiming to promote regional tourism. This journey highlights my

evolution from a student leader to a proactive tourism promoter in my hometown, leveraging leadership and organizational skills to make a positive community impact.

Establishment of the Cultural Arts Society, Zhong Hua UPM

In 2005, I became involved in the Chinese Cultural Arts Association at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), previously known as the Chinese Student Aspiration Team. As a founder of this association, it was not an easy process to establish the organization. It required 6 months to a year to obtain the approval for this organization.

While serving on the Student Representative Council (MPP) in 2005, I was inspired to create a platform that could help students understand the cultures and religions of races other than the Chinese. During my year on the MPP, it was necessary to plan

enhancements and improvements to assist UPM students. The Chinese New Year Festival was one of the first programs implemented in my first year at UPM. Students lacked alternatives or dedicated classes for practice, necessitating external performances at that time. After the Chinese New Year Festival program ended and with the funds received, we were able to support students by purchasing musical instruments and hiring experienced music teachers for the students. This way, students could further showcase their hidden talents.

The aim of the Zhong Hua Association was to broaden students' minds about Chinese culture. This was important because many Malays were unaware of Chinese customs and vice versa. By organizing open programs, such as calligraphy workshops, among others, we could expand students' minds.

Member of the Student Representative Council (MPP)



List of Classes Established

- Chess Class
- Chinese Music Class
- Wide Music Workshop (collaborative workshop)
- Modern Dance Class
- Traditional Dance Class
- Yoga Class
- Culture Art Workshop
- Group Learning Class
- Silat Class



The Cultural Arts Society, Zhong Hua UPM

Involvement in Volunteerism

Although the process to establish this association was not as straightforward as it might seem, with strong determination and the support of like-minded friends, the Zhong Hua Association was founded. In addition, the association aims to provide a platform for students from different ethnic groups to understand, learn, and practice Chinese culture. It remains actively involved in volunteer activities, including upgrading the entrance gate of a Chinese food court in Sungai Petani, Kedah. It has also participated in creating mural art in Sungai Petani to beautify walls with paintings. This effort creates a spot for the community or tourists to take photos against the backdrop of 3D wall paintings. Furthermore, it includes cleaning activities on Songsong Island in Sungai Petani, Kedah, and organizing Farm Trips for foreign tourists to Malaysia.

The Batu Dua Natural Farming group was established at Batu Dua, Jalan Kuala Ketil, Sungai Petani, Kedah. In 2020, the Batu Dua Farm was founded as a community

program to assist entrepreneurs in direct selling. Moreover, the community and entrepreneurs can also explore their talents through activities available at Batu Dua Natural Farm. These activities include crafting, painting, soap making, learning to make organic tea, and many more. The Community Program at Batu Dua Natural Farm is held at the end of each month on Saturdays, featuring different themes. This theme rotation makes it more interesting. The purpose of this program is to foster community spirit and neighborhood camaraderie, and it also provides an opportunity to meet many people. However, these volunteer activities are still closely related to the program I studied at UPM, which is a Degree in Human Archaeology and Management. Today I am actively involved in the business sector, managing a tourism company. I have been managing a tourism company since 2011, training 9 employees to assist in the success and further development of the tourism sector. Madam Liong and Son Vacation & Conventions Sdn. Bhd, located at 31, Lorong 20, Taman Patani Jaya, 08000 Sungai Petani, Kedah, is among the tourism companies I have personally managed.

Memorable Moments in UPM

Memories during my time at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) are undoubtedly centered around my tenure as a member of the Student Representative Council (MPP). Even though I was only an MPP member at UPM for a year, there was a lot to learn. Serving as an MPP representative was not easy and required high spirit and firmness. As an MPP, one needed to be a person who could assist fellow students and always be ready to listen to the students' grievances. Among the issues I fought for were helping to reduce food prices at the student cafe, addressing internet problems

in the dorms, dealing with the shortage of buses, and advocating for holidays during festival seasons and study weeks. The time spent as an MPP is unforgettable because it allowed me to meet many people and hone my leadership skills.

University is the best place for you to learn social skills and get involved with the programs offered. Always expand your circle so that you can train yourself before entering the workforce. Don't miss the chance to join activities organized by the university because you will gain many benefits from these experiences.

The new generation is not the same as the previous ones. Today's generation needs to be bold and efficient. In simple terms, you need to be brave to try, brave to fail, and brave to make mistakes. Most importantly, don't take the easy path. Always encourage yourself to do new things. This is because, from the act of trying, you can learn and further improve yourself. If you are afraid to try and afraid of making mistakes, you might find it difficult in the future, especially when you step into the workforce.

Batu Dua Natural Farm, Sungai Petani, Kedah



The opening ceremony of the entrance gate of a Chinese food court in Sungai Petani, Kedah.

Highlights

Highlight

of Alumni Activities

January - December

2023



PUSAT PERHUBUNGAN ALUMNI ALUMNI RELATIONS CENTRE



UPM International Alumni Chapter (UPMIAC) Initiation Meeting

6 January 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

A meeting was held to discuss the chapter's future planning for 2023 as to demonstrate and highlight the chapter's effort in contributing back to the university. UPMIAC plans to introduce Anugerah Emas Alumni Antarabangsa as well as establishing network connection with other departments in optimising potential and contribution from alumni to alma mater.



Courtesy Visit with Norzack Scholarship

9 January 2023 - Haura Cafe, Serdang

A Courtesy visit between ARCUPM representatives with Norzack Scholarship sponsor, Ezhar Farouk Zakaria, was held to sign an agreement for the UPM Alumni Scholarship. Norzack Scholarship has sponsored a diploma student, Qistina Ashra Alwi Zulkifli from the Faculty of Agricultural and Forestry Science at Bintulu campus.



Appreciation Ceremony for Yang Amat Mulia Dato' Seri Diraja Syed Razlan Syed Putra Jamalullail

26 January 2023 - Astana Putra

PAUPM organized a simple appreciation ceremony for the retirement of Chairman of the Board of Directors of UPM, His Royal Highness Dato' Seri Diraja Syed Razlan Syed Putra Jamalullail. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud, Director of the ARCUPM, and PAUPM Exco also present.



Higher Education Minister, Dato' Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin Visits UPM

27 January 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia

Aimed to discuss UPM's direction and niche in education, research and the university's role in helping the country to deal with the national food crisis. In conjunction with the visit, Alumni Relations Centre UPM (ARCUPM) took the opportunity to promote Putrabiz@ alumni buggy entrepreneurial activities and merchandise to the minister of MOHE.



Highlights



Majlis Malam Alumni Negara (MAN 2023) Preparatory Workshop

30 January 2023 - Kuala Terengganu

Majlis Malam Alumni Negara (MAN 2023) Preparatory Workshop was organised by the Malaysia Public University Alumni Council (MALumni) at Drawbridge, Kuala Terengganu. The workshop agenda was to focus on the implementation of the national event which was scheduled to be held on 29 July 2023 and the selection of award recipients among public universities (UA) alumni.



Financial Management Briefing by Bursar Representative

2 February 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre
UPM

A financial management briefing on payment and procurement by Bursar representative Junaida Adan, Head of Division; and Norazura Ali, Assistant Accountant, Central Management of Operation Financial Division (COD).



Alumni Relations Centre Together for the Higher Education Minister Mandate

31 January 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Alumni Relations Centre as an entity under the education institution took part to hear the new year speech and mandate from the current Minister of Higher Education speech, hence will comply with any related niche as per intended.



Megachili Project Phase 1 Completed

3 February 2023 -

Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Highest gratitude to all who contributed to the success of Agro Alumni Industry Mentoring & Coaching (AIMAC): Megachili Project Phase 1 and congratulations to all participants. May the knowledge and experience gained will be an added value for students in the future endeavor.

Casual Meet-up with Sulung Scholarship Recipients and Megachili Project Phase 1 Participants

3 February 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

This ice breaking session between Sulung Scholarship recipients and Megachili Project Phase 1 participants was held to commemorate the programme completion. Congratulations to Nur Athirah Azrul (Bachelor of Business Administration with Honours) and Siti Nur Izatul Mohd Zukri (Doctor of Medicine) as the first recipients of Sulung Scholarship in 2023.



Putrabiz@Alumni: Mesti Makan Dulu

7-9 February 2023 - UPM Great Hall and Residential Colleges

ARCUPM in collaboration with UPM alumni had provided breakfast consisting of bread and water to students sitting for the Final Examination of the 2022/2023 academic session. The initiative was to highlight Putrabiz@alumni buggy in entrepreneurial activities run by students. The buggy was also contributed by UPM alumni for students to generate side income during their studies at UPM.



Courtesy Visit with Nuaim Scholarship

13 February 2023 - Bandar Baru Bangi

A courtesy visit between ARCUPM representatives with the Director of Nuaim Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd., Suhaizi Mokhtar and Managing Director, Mohd Zanuar Zainon was held to sign an agreement for the UPM Alumni Scholarship. Nuaim Scholarship has sponsored a bachelor student, Nurul Ezzatil Errisya Mohd Noor from the Faculty of Forestry and Environment.

Highlights



Vice-Chancellor Narrative 2023: Memahat Gemilang Membingkas Kelangsungan al-Falah

15 February 2023 - UPM Great Hall
7 strategies outlined by UPM Vice-Chancellor, Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd Roslan Sulaiman in Narrative 2023 are:

- Strengthen Contributions in Agriculture and Food Security
- Aligning Research and Networking Towards Social Innovation
- Promoting Student Empowerment
- Streamlining Green Strategies and Good Governance
- Intensifying Campus Digitalisation
- Seeking Income Generation
- Uniting Alumni Strength



Megachili Project Phase 2 Chili Harvest

17 February 2023 - Tan Sri Aishah Ghani College

Three kilograms of chili was harvested at Tan Sri Aishah Ghani College in conjunction with the Megachili Project Phase 2 together with ARCUPM Deputy Director, Fahmi Azar Mistar, college Principal, Assoc. Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Shukri Muhammad Noor, and Megachili Phase 2 participants, Ahmad Zafar Ahmad Khairul Nizam and Nur Azrina Erialdi.





Dinner with UPM Sarawak Alumni

22 February 2023 - Kuching, Sarawak

Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM, and PAUPM Exco attended a dinner hosted by Sarawak alumni at Topspot Restaurant, Kuching. This event was held to strengthen the relationship between Sarawak alumni and PAUPM, as well as to discuss about Hi-Tea Ceremony, which will be take place on the following day at the Hotel Serapi in Kuching.



PAUPM in Sejahtera Asia Segment, TVS Sarawak

23 February 2023 - TVS Kuching Sarawak

In conjunction with the Hi-Tea ceremony, PAUPM has been given a slot in TVS' Sejahtera Asia Segment with the topic of "Aspirations of UPM Alumni Association for Community and Country". Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM, spoke for 15 minutes with the segment's hosts, Dr. Alexson Nillian and Mr. Fattah Bolhanuddin about the topic.

UPM Alumni Association Hi-Tea Ceremony

23 February 2023 - Kuching, Sarawak

In collaboration with the ARCUPM, PAUPM organised a Hi-Tea Ceremony at Hotel Serapi in Kuching, Sarawak. This ceremony was attended by Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM; Dato' Syed Abdul Rahman Syed Abdul Rashid, Deputy President of PAUPM; Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed, Secretary General of PAUPM; Hj. Zainal Abidin Yahya, Treasurer of PAUPM; Associate Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud, ARCUPM Director and Sarawak UPM Alumni. YAs the invited guest, Dato' Seri Diraja Syed Razlan Syed Putra Jamalullail delivered his speech about the Food Sustainability Program for Sarawak and Malaysia, right after the announcement of committee members of UPM Sarawak Alumni. The ceremony concluded with a photo session with everyone in attendance. Congratulations to Sarawak UPM Alumni for their effort to have a Sarawak Chapter, and best wishes for their success.



Highlights

Alumni TRACE to Malaysian Pepper Board Kuching

24 February 2023 - Malaysian Pepper Board Kuching

Tracing UPM alumni at Malaysian Pepper Board Kuching for further networking and future collaborations with ARCUPM and UPM.



Yayasan Pak Rashid Benchmark Visit from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)

28 February 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

A visit to exchange ideas and experiences in managing alumni scholarship and in depth briefing on the establishment of Yayasan Pak Rashid scholarship.



Public Sector Conducive Ecosystem (EKSA) 2023 Kickstart

2 March 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Introducing latest EKSA committee members and conducted a communal activity throughout the office in preparation for internal and external EKSA benchmarking visits.

Kota Tinggi Flood Relief Mission

9 March 2023 - Kota Tinggi, Johor

A flood relief mission at Kampung Kelantan, Kota Tinggi, Johor was mobilised in collaboration with the University Islamic Centre, Centre for Management of Waqf, Zakat and Endowment, Co-curriculum and Student Development Centre, ARCUPM, Student Affairs Division, Pendeta Za'ba College, PUTRA International Centre, and Student Representatives Council. Bakul Rahmah contributions were handed over to the flood victims' to ease some of their burdens.





Open University Malaysia (OUM) Benchmark Visit

17 March 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
A benchmark visit was held to initiate future collaborations and exchange of ideas between UPM, ARCUPM and Open University Malaysia (OUM).



Alumni Putra@Jannah

16 March 2023 - Executive Room, Canselori Putra ARCUPM in collaboration with MyFundAction handed over 3000 new clothes to 9 alumni strategic partners to be distributed to the targeted recipients. The handover symbolic was completed by UPM Vice Chansellor, Dato' Prof. Dr Mohd Roslan Sulaiman to all strategic partners.



Kolej Yayasan Pahang Benchmark Visit

20 March 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
A benchmark visit was held to initiate future collaborations and exchange of ideas between UPM, ARCUPM and Kolej Yayasan Pahang.



Tautan Mahabbah Series 7

8 April 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
Tautan Mahabbah Series 7 was held at the As-Solihin Orphanage, Kanchong Darat, Banting. ARCUPM Director, Associate Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud, handed the donation to the Manager of the Orphanage and Asnaf As-Solihin, Mr. Molyana Mahmud.



Highlights

Freemeals Ramadan

10 April 2023 - UPM Academic A Complex Bustop

During Ramadan 2023, PAUPM provided a 100-meal package to UPM students with the help of Puan Rafidah and a few volunteers. Dr. Ibrahim, Secretary General of PAUPM; and Hj. Wan Ali, Manager of PAUPM, also participated in this activity.



3R Waste Management Talk by SWCorp

11 April 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Ts. Sahhir Kunju Abdul Karim, the Director of the 3R Management Division conducted a briefing on 3R solid waste management to enhance community understanding of the necessity to prioritise environmental cleanliness and 3R practices.



Majlis Iftar Ramadan

12 April 2023 - TNCPI Building

During Ramadan 2023, PAUPM hosted a Ramadan Iftar Ceremony, which was attended by around 58 guests, including PAUPM exco, alumni with their families, students, and UPM staff. Many thanks to everyone who has donated to UPM Asnaf Students, Freemeals, and the Raudhatul Jannah Charity House Care Center, Olak Lempit, Banting Selangor. Deepest gratitude to everyone who came to liven up the event together.



Iftar Mega Putra 2023

13 April 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia

Many thanks to those who helped ARCUPM in distributing donations of breaking fast meals to Universiti Putra Malaysia students, involving:

- Dutch Lady Milk Industries Berhad
- MyFundAction
- Chapter Yosh UPM
- Mahasiswa Putra
- Buggy PutraBiz@ Alumni
- Binaree Cafe
- Haura Cafe
- 3 Sisters@Cabin KTDI
- Chapter Student Ambassador (CSA)
- Para Alumni UPM & Semua penyumbang



EKSA Benchmarking Visit from UPM Internal Audit Department
14 April 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Internal Audit Division's benchmark visit to ARCUPM was held to exchange and develop new ideas for the EKSA between both parties.



Donation Handover Ceremony to Rumah Kebajikan Asnaf Raudhatul Jannah

19 April 2023 - Rumah Kebajikan Asnaf Raudhatul Jannah

A few days before Ramadan ended, PAUPM took the opportunity to handover an RM 2,000 donation and 'Baju Raya' to Rumah Kebajikan Asnaf Raudhatul Jannah in Olak Lempit, Banting Selangor. The donation was made possible with the help of Ramadan Donation Fund. Thank you to everyone who contributed; hopefully the donations will help those in need.



Mega Raya UPM 2023

10 May 2023 - Banquet Hall UPM

The Eid al-Fitr Celebration 2023 received a lively response despite entering 19 Syawal on the day of its event. The celebration involved all UPM staff at Serdang and Bintulu campuses simultaneously. This event was not focused on one place as it involved 13 strategic locations around UPM with the merger of several entities in each cluster.



EKSA Benchmarking Visit from the Institute for Mathematical Research

12 May 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

A benchmark visit from the Institute for Mathematical Research to the ARCUPM was held to exchange ideas and future collaborations between the two organizations.



Highlights

Mesra Alumni Ceremony 2023

13 May 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

The Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) organized the Mesra Alumni Ceremony on May 13th, as part of initiatives to strengthen the collaboration and support of alumni with ARCUPM in ensuring the success of university programs in the future.



Trace Bridges Link@Padang Indonesia 2023

17-19 May 2023 - Padang Indonesia

Tracing Alumni For Collaboration & Engagement (TRACE) - Bridges Link@Padang, Indonesia 2023, in conjunction with the Alumni Gathering program in Indonesia on May 17-19, 2023, in Padang, West Sumatra, dedicated to tracing UPM alumni in Padang, Indonesia, through the reunion of UPM Alumni Chapter Indonesia, which has been actively engaged since 2008.

ARCUPM Appreciation and Task Handover Ceremony

16 May 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Puan Aida Fitri Peli has been appointed as Assistant Registrar which was previously held by Puan Nik Hafzaini Nik Hassan, who left in mid-April 2023 after being reassigned to the Admissions Division and the Academic Administration Division as head of the International Admissions Section



MEKAR 13 Lebaran Edition: UPM Dulu-Dulu Hi-Tea

20 May 2023 - Great Hall UPM

Menggamit Kenangan Alumni Reunion or MEKAR in collaboration with UPM Dulu Dulu Facebook has organised a hi-tea ceremony for UPM Alumni Day celebration on 21 May. The ceremony managed to gather 800 UPM alumni from the past 20 years to celebrate their return to 'home' after a long period of time. Various activities and programmes were organized in an effort to bring alumni back to alma mater and contribute towards the development, sustainability and sharing with the university and students.



Alumni Day: Friendly Golf Tournament

20 May 2023 - Uniputra Golf Club
 For the 2023 Alumni Day celebration, PAUPM has organised a friendly golf tournament with a total of 68 participants taking part in this competition. Also participating were Dato' Ibrahim Komoo, Chairman of the Board of Directors of UPM; Dato' Mohd Roslan Sulaiman, Vice Chancellor of UPM; Dato' Dr. Hassan Mad, Director of UPM Holdings; Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM; and UPM alumni. The main objectives of organising this competition is to strengthen the relationship between alumni and UPM staff and to attract alumni to return to UPM.



Muhibbah Visit from Islamic Science University of Malaysia

24 May 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
 The Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) Alumni and Career Center paid a friendly visit to ARCUPM to share experiences and working practices as the Center of Responsibility in managing the function of alumni.



Warisan Budi Clock Tower Tender Form Purchasing and Contractor Site Visit

1 June 2023 - Development and Asset Management Office UPM
 The purchase of tender form and contractor's site visit of the Warisan Budi Clock Tower project indicate that the long awaited clock tower will finally be built after 16 years of waiting. We request that everyone, especially the UPM community, pray for the ease and completion of the Warisan Budi Clock Tower building.



YOSH, MyFundAction Turkiye Branch Manager Friendly Visit

14 June 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
 A warm visit by Amzar Khalili Khalid, an alumni from Class of 2022 who was constantly involved with university's activities during his studies and also the Branch Manager of YOSH, MyFundAction in Turkiye. The friendly visit was not only a 'former student' visit to the alma mater, but also an endeavor to further improve the relationship between the two, particularly ARCUPM and also YOSH and MyFundAction in various activities in the future.



Yayasan Pak Rashid Board of Trustees Meeting

2 June 2023 - Canselori Putra UPM
 The Pak Rashid Foundation (YPR) Board of Trustees Meeting was chaired by Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd. Roslan Sulaiman, Vice Chancellor of UPM.

Highlights

Internal Audit of ISO 9001:2015 Standard

14 June 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Puan Norazlina Zulkefli and Puan Nur Fazrina Ismail, have been assigned as auditors to audit ARCUPM. The advice given will be used as a benchmark to continue in providing more efficient and effective services to further strengthen relationships and also to give space and time for a sharing session with the sponsors and graduates.

Tautan Kasih

26 June 2023 - Foyer Taklimat, Serdang, UPM

"Tautan Kasih" Programme organised by ARCUPM, has witnessed the Vice Chancellor of UPM, Dato' Prof. Dr. Roslan Sulaiman, handing over financial donations totaling RM 100.00 (one off) from UPM alumni, Dr. Hamisah Hassan and Che Wan Mohd Zuhaimi Che Wan Hussain, to 62 asnaf and B40 students. This donation is one of the efforts to help the alma mater for students in need, especially those who live in residential colleges near the Serdang campus.



MEKAR 12: 5th RU Alumni KPM 73 & 1970 Intake in Celebration of the Golden Jubilee

9 July 2023 - Merdeka Studio Complex, FINAS Ampang

The 12th Series of the Alumni Reunion Gathering (MEKAR): 5th RU Alumni KPM 1973 & 1970, in conjunction with the Golden Jubilee Celebration, was held on July 9, 2023. The program, attended by 77 alumni of the Malaya Agricultural College (KPM) from the intake years 1973 and 1970, was vibrant with various stories and nostalgic memories, especially for those who had not met for a long time.





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Highlights

Breakfast B4 Exam

10 July 2023 - Dewan Besar, Pusat Kesenian dan Kebudayaan Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Alumni has contributed breakfast to students taking the final test for the second semester of 2022/2023. The aim of this project is to encourage students to do well in their tests while advocating them to become alumni who are always ready to contribute back to their alma mater.



Durian and Ketereh Cultural Festival 2023

15 July 2023 - Kok Lanas, Kelantan
Kawasan Rukun Tetangga (KRT) Ketereh, in collaboration with PAUPM, organised the Durian and Ketereh Cultural Festival 2023 which lasted for two days. Among the activities held during the festival are An exposition of durian kinds and species, as well as Kelantan native delicacies, a presentation of traditional Kelantan activities, and demonstrations by the programme's primary sponsors.



Seminar & Exhibition on Herbs for Health and Healing

11 July 2023 - Auditorium Rashdan Baba
PAUPM together with UPM, have successfully organised a Seminar and Exhibition on Herbs for Health and Healing with the collaboration of the Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (KPKM), the Department of Agriculture (DOA), the Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI), and the Institute of Medical Research (IMR). A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between PAUPM and HERBagus Trading during the seminar opening ceremony. Many thanks to the 3 main sponsors of this seminar, namely Menteri Besar Selangor Incorporated (MBI), GNI Pharma Sdn Bhd (GNI), and HERBagus Trading.



KanWork Charity Hi-Tea

16 July 2023 - UPM Main Hall
PAUPM attended the KanWork Charity Hi-Tea Ceremony with Dr. Mazanah Muhamad, President of KanWork; Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd Roslan Sulaiman, Vice Chancellor of UPM; Prof. Ismi Arif Ismail, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and International UPM; Dato' Raihan Sharif, President PAUPM; Datin Seri Masadiana Muhamad, wife of Selangor Chief Minister; as well as Her Majesty, Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin, Tengku Permaisuri Selangor, as a Patron of KanWork.

EKSA PKPP Benchmark Visit to ARCUM

21 July 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
 The visit was attended by the Director of PKPP, Associate Prof. Dr. Omrah Hassan@Hussin, as well as the Deputy Director of PKPP, Encik Noor Mohamad Shakil Hameed, and resulted in a cooperation on the practice of EKSA in their respective PTj. PKPP is one of the PTj that is always consistent in practicing EKSA in order to increase achievements and work quality. The PKPP delegates were also given a tour of the ARCUM office, as well as an opportunity to exchange ideas and thoughts.



KanWork Charity Hi-Tea Appreciation

22 July 2023 - Foyer Dewan Taklimat Serdang, UPM
 The KanWork Appreciation Ceremony was held along with Charity Hi-Tea. KanWork hosted this event to recognise and thank the partners and committee members who have worked tirelessly to ensure the Hi-Tea Charity Event goes smoothly. Highest gratitude to those involved and hope that the collaboration will continue to benefit all parties.



UPM International Alumni Chapter 1st Year Anniversary

22 July 2023 - Ampang, Selangor
 Former PAUPM President, YAM Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Syed Putra Jalalullail; PAUPM Secretary, Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed; PAUPM Exco, Mr. Shaun Goh; and PAUPM Manager Hj. Wan Ali W. Ab Rahman were present during UPM International Alumni Chapter first anniversary.

EKSA SGS Benchmark Visit to ARCUM

27 July 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM
 The visit involved 12 staff from UPM School of Graduates Studies (SGS) led to a sharing of EKSA practices in their respective PTj. SGS is also one of the PTj that practices the best EKSA culture and was among the best PTjs in the Employee Quality and Innovation Day last year. The visit from SGS was welcomed by ARCUM Director, Associate Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud, ARCUM Deputy Director, Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar, ARCUM officers and staff.



Highlights



Yasin Recital and Tahlil UPM

27 July 2023 - Masjid UPM

The UPM Mosque held a Yasin recital and Tahlil for UPM alumni who recently passed away. The ceremony took place after the Maghrib Prayer and had about 30 attendants.

This Yasin and Tahlil reading is was intended for:

1. Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub (former KPDN Minister and UPM 1984 Alumni)
2. Dr. Hamdan Hj. Mohd Noor (former College Principal Fifth and Dean of the Faculty of Science, UPM Alumni '75)
3. Datin Rosmiah Anuar (wife of Dato' Raihan, UPM Alumni Association)
4. Dato Wira Yusuf Semahil @ Pak Usuf (Acting Treasurer & UPM Alumnus)



Alumni Cup in Conjunction with UPM Staff Sports Championship 2023

30 July 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia

PAUPM has contributed an Alumni Cup for the cycling sports category during UPM Staff Sports Championship (SUSTAF 2023). Hj. Wan Ali W. Ab Rahman, Manager of PAUPM, was delighted to give the prizes and hand over the Alumni Cup to the cycling sports category winners. Congratulations to everyone who won.

Persidangan Komuniti Pertanian Kebangsaan 2023

5-6 August 2023 - UPM Main Hall

PAUPM took part in the 2023 National Agricultural Community Conference, which was organised by the UPM Faculty of Agriculture. This involvement aimed to promote and advertise PAUPM souvenir products as well as HERBagus products.



Post-Mortem Seminar & Exhibition on Herbs for Health and Healing

7 August 2023 - PAUPM

A post-mortem session with all the Seminar and Exhibition on Herbs for Health and Healing Committees was held to discuss proposals received during the seminar to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Safety (KPKM).



EKSA Benchmark Visit from PSPK

10 August 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

ARCUPM received a visit from UPM Centre for Corporate Strategy and Relations (PSPK) to exchange ideas regarding the working environment among the PTj.



Evaluation for Program Semarak Merdeka UPM

16 August 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

ARCUPM was one of the PTj that have joined the 2023 Kibar Jalur Gemilang competition. The preparation for the competition is led by Ms. Afifatus Shahira and is helped by ARCUPM staff. The juries were invited to ARCUPM by ARCUPM Director, Associate Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud along with Deputy Director, Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar to evaluate the creativity of the staff.



ARCUPM Director's Appreciation Ceremony and Yassin Recitation

23 August 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Appreciation ceremony and yassin recitation were held to show appreciation to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud for all he has done while being the Director of ARCUPM from January 2021 until August 2023. Along with the appreciation ceremony, Dr. Arba'ie's 60th birthday was also celebrated during the ceremony as well as ARCUPM staff whose birthdays are in the third quarter of 2023.

UPM Merdeka Poem Recitation Competition

22 August 2023 - Panggung Percubaan UPM

The competition was held at UPM Experimental Theatre on 22 August 2023 for Program Semarak Merdeka 2023. This poem recitation competition was joined by 31 participants from 22 PTj. Every participant recites their poems with vigor and passion with different ways of approach in their own creativity. Every PTj has brought along their supporters to make the competition more interesting and merrier.



Highlights

Warisan Budi Clock Tower Site Handover Ceremony

23 August 2023 - Umami Cafe, Kolej Tan Sri Aishah Ghani

This Site Handover ceremony will serve as the mark point and proof that the construction work for this clock tower has officially started after being on hold for 16 years. The symbolism of this site handover is done by giving a construction safety helmet as a symbol from UPM Vice Chancellor, Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd. Roslan Sulaiman to Mr. Jamaluddin Jaafar, the Director of Fitrah Bitrade Sdn. Bhd.



Appreciation and Gratitude to Alumni Strategic Friends Ceremony

23 August 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

Following the retirement of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud, ARCUPM staff held a farewell ceremony for attended by Dr. Arba'ie's friends and acquaintances to meet up for the last time before he retires. The ceremony was also attended by President of the UPM Alumni Association Dato' Raihan Sharif and the former Chairman, Board of Directors of UPM, Y.A.M Tengku Syarif Laksamana Perlis Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Syed putra Jamalullail and all of ARCUPM staff.



UPM Merdeka EVE Celebration

30 August 2023 - Dewan Besar, Pusat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian SSAAS, UPM

The 66th Merdeka Eve celebration was held to celebrate Malaysia's 66th Independence Day on the eve of it at UPM. At 11.59 PM, the countdown before midnight starts. As soon as the countdown ends, Prof. Dr. Mohd. Roslan Sulaiman shouts "Merdeka!" 7 times which has marked the 66th anniversary of Malaysia's independence.



ARCUPM Director's Retirement Hi-Tea Ceremony

7 September 2023 - Menara Kuala Lumpur

This ceremony was held to honor the retirement of the ARCUPM Director, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud. The ceremony which has involved all of ARCUPM staff is a simple high tea held as a farewell ceremony for Dr. Arba'ie who had retired due to compulsory retirement on 23 August.



Serdang Sun 24th Issue 2nd Meeting

13 September 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

The second meeting for Serdang Sun 24th Issue, 2023 was held at Bilik Menara Warisan Budi, ARCUPM. The meeting was chaired by the ARCUPM Deputy Director, Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar, and was joined by the editorial board of Serdang Sun. This meeting discusses the writing process and draft reviewing as well as the issues that still have not yet decided including budget and UPM alumni that will be featured in the magazine later.



Interview with 2006 Pak Rashid Foundation's Gold Medal Recipient

14 September 2023 - FSKTM UPM

Dr. Normalia Samian, a recipient of Pak Rashid Foundation Gold Medal 2006 and also a lecturer in the Department of Communication and Network Technology, Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology at UPM, was interviewed by PAUPM. This interview was conducted to know about the most recent developments for medal holders after graduation from UPM.



Putra Jannah Donation Handover

14 September 2023 - Pusat Jagaan Baitul Islah

New clothes donation session was organized by (ARCUPM) with Baitul Islah and Teratak Umami Care Centers as part of the PUTRA@Jannah Alumni Program. The Al-Riqab group, orphans, asnaf, and the underprivileged were all included in the community that ARCUPM is trying to support with this program.

EKSA Internal Audit Series 1

19 September 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

This internal audit served as early preparation for officers and staff members to face the official EKSA evaluation, which will be conducted by the appointed jury. This audit was carried out with attention so that flaws and deficiencies can be resolved in order to create a more conducive work environment while also providing a more organized, neat, and safe work environment.



Highlights

MEKAR 14: Chapter Science Diploma with Education 1973/1974

21 September 2023 - Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre (PKPP) PutraCocu Hall

This series was done with the collaboration with eDU-PARK and has involved 38 alumni from Science Diploma with Education Class 1973/1974. During the program, the certificate of the chapter establishment was handed to the founder, YM Raja Ahmad Shah and exchanged with a donation from the alumni to ARCUPM with the sum of RM1600 through 1 Alumni 1 Sumbangan Ringgit donation. Through this program, the alumni also got to visit Ladang 10, Putra Mart, Warisan Melayu Museum and nostalgic places like Sultan Abdul Samad Library and Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Arts & Cultural Centre Big Hall.



FORUM: Members' Aspirations to UPM Alumni Association

23 September 2023 - Auditorium Rashdan Baba, UPM

PAUPM has held a forum with the title Members' Aspirations to UPM Alumni Association for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The forum was attended by the members of PAUPM and the panel lineup consists of 3 alumni figures from the 70s, 80s and 90s. Those figures are the Advisor of PAUPM, Tuan Haji Ghazali Selamat (Alumni Class 1970); Chairman of UPM Holdings Sdn Bhd, Prof. Dato' Mohd Fauzi Hj. Mohd Ramlan (Alumni Class 1981) and Director of Linemax Media Sdn Bhd, Mr. Shahrudin Mahadi (Alumni Class 1992) and is also joined by Vice President of PAUPM, Dato Syed Abd Rahman Syed Abd Rashid as the moderator. Also present as guests of honor were President of PAUPM, Dato' Raihan Sharif and Manager of PAUPM, Tuan Haji Wan Ali.

FORUM: Members' Aspirations to UPM Alumni Association

23 September 2023 - Auditorium Rashdan Baba

PAUPM has held a forum titled Aspirasi Ahli Kepada Persatuan Alumni UPM for the 2023 PAUPM Annual General Meeting. This forum involved 3 panellists, namely YBrs. Hj. Ghazali Selamat (Alumni Class of 1970 and PAUPM Advisor), YBhg. Dato' Dr. Mohd Fauzi Hj. Ramlan (Alumni Class of 1981 and Chairman of UPM Holdings Sdn Bhd), and YBrs. Mr. Shahrudin Mahadi (Alumni Class of 1992 and Director of Linemax Media Sdn Bhd) and a Moderator, YH. Dato' Syed Abd Rahman Syed Abd Rashid (Class of 1970 Alumni and Deputy President of PAUPM). This forum served as a platform to share ideas and suggestions from members to ensure the improvement of PAUPM.



Annual General Meeting 2023 PAUPM

23 September 2023 - Auditorium Rashdan Baba

PAUPM had held an Annual General Meeting for 2023 before the end of September. This year, in addition to reporting on PAUPM's activities and financial situation, PAUPM This forum served as a platform and elected. As a result of the election, Dato' Raihan Sharif as elected President of the PAUPM, and Dato' Syed Abd Rahman Syed Abd Rashid as Deputy President of the PAUPM for the 2023–2025 session. Hj. Aliman Ali, Hj. Zainal Abidin Yahya, Ir. S. Kumar S. Subramaniam, Mr. Shaun Goh You Chang, Ir. Alim Maktar, Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed, Dr. Ahmad Fareed Ismail, and Lar, Amos Ng, and Mr. Mat Amin Jaafar were also elected as committee members. Congratulations to everyone who was chosen, and best of luck in your service!



PAUPM Golden Jubilee Dinner

23 September 2023 - Astana Putra, UPM

After several years of planning, PAUPM conducted a Golden Jubilee Dinner, which was attended by 200 alumni and their families. Ambassadors from Palestine, as well as diplomats from Iraq and Nigeria, were also present. The presentation of prizes to six PAUPM Distinguished Alumni figures added to the excitement of the ceremony. Congratulations and appreciation to everyone who was involved.



Interview with Dr. Rohani Ibrahim

26 September 2023 - Alumni Relations Centre UPM

This interview took place in Bilik Menara Warisan Budi, to collect and complete the writing materials for the release of the "Coffee Table Book". One of the topics in the book is about Warisan Budi Clock Tower. This book will be published around April-May 2024 after the construction of the clock tower is completed, which is expected around April 2024.



Shirt Donation from KLSCCCI to KOSASS Students

29 September 2023 - Balai Minda KOSASS, UPM

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Kuala Lumpur & Selangor (KLSCCCI) has made a donation of Malaysia Day clothes to 30 selected students from Kolej Sultan Alaeddin Suleiman Shah (KOSASS). The donation was handed over by KLSCCCI National Unity Committee Chairman, Datuk Wira Richard Lau Chi Chiang himself.



Session 2023/2024 Students Registration to Residential Colleges

30 September 2023 & 1 October 2023 - Padang Kawad, UPM

ARCUPM has set up a tent near the Parents' Tent at the UPM Parade Ground with the aim of retracing UPM alumni among parents of newly registered students to update alumni information in the Alumni Information System (AIS).



Highlights

MPP: SEBA-i Forum from ARCUPM

5 October 2023 - UPM Big Hall
 'Sejam Bersama Alumni Industri' (SEBA-i) is a slot conducted by ARCUPM for Minggu Perkasa Putra (MPP) session 2023/2024. One Hour With Alumni or known as SEBA is a beneficial program with successful UPM alumni where they share their experiences while studying at UPM to the students and campus residents.



Putra Souq

7 October 2023 - UPM Big Hall

ARCUPM is one of the PTj that have opened booths to promote Chapter Students Ambassador Association (CSA) to new students. CSA is an association established by ARCUPM to create connections between students, ARCUPM and UPM alumni.



ARC-CS Podcast: Menara Jam Warisan Budi UPM

14 October 2023 - Galeri Putra

ARC-CS Podcast: Menara Jam Warisan Budi UPM featuring two invited panelists, Associates Prof. Ts. Dr. Hassan Alli (Deputy Dean of JINM and Development, Faculty of Design and Architecture UPM) and Ar. Nik Fazlysham Nik Mat (Architech, Faculty of Design and Architecture UPM), along with the podcast host, Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar (Deputy Director of ARCUPM).



Free Meal RTE

9 October 2023 -

Co-Curriculum and Student Development Centre

The Free Meal@PKPP program was organized by the PKPP in collaboration with MyFundAction, the UPM YOSH Chapter and ARCUPM. A total of 90 packs of food cooked by PKPP staff and 48 packs of "Ready-To-Eat" food donated by MyFundAction, were distributed to the students.





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Untuk maklumat lanjut, sila hubungi:

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Highlights

First Meeting of CSA Session 2023/2024

12 October 2023 - Deputy Vice Chancellor
(Research & Innovation) Building

This first meeting included first-year students from the 2023/2024 session as well as senior CSA students under the guidance of ARCUPM to inform new students about the club as well as providing an overall look for the possible upcoming programs with alumni.



Interview with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arba'ie Sujud

18 October 2023 - Alumni Relation Center UPM
(ARCUPM)

This interview is meant to collect information, opinions, and ideas from Dr. Arba'ie who was involved in the establishment of the Warisan Budi Clock Tower. His sharing of the concepts behind the building of the clock tower is appreciated and will be portrayed in the Coffee Table Book.



CSA Showcase Programme

21-23 October 2023 - University Putra Malaysia (UPM)
/ Kuala Lumpur / Putrajaya

This programme involved students from Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 (MAN1) Pekanbaru, Indonesia to a cross-culture visit in Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur. This visit aimed to showcase the culture in Malaysia as they were brought along to see the campus life in UPM.



Interview with Dato' Zulkiflee Othman

19 October 2023 - Alumni Relation Center UPM

Dato' Zulkiflee is also one of the people that are involved from the beginning of the suggestion process of the Warisan Budi Clock Tower project because the early planning and initial idea that was discussed in 2006 was when he was the Bursar of UPM. His sharings will also be included in the Coffee Table Book.



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IMBAS KOD QR
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Highlights

CSA Fraternity Camp

27-29 October 2023 - Pusat Pendidikan Perhutanan Sultan Idris Shah (SISFEC)

A total of 38 participants and 10 facilitators from ARCUPM staff were involved in the Fraternity Camp Program which lasted for 3 days and 2 nights. The main objective of this program is to strengthen the relationship between CSA members and ARCUPM staff.



Interview with Prof. Ar. Mohd Razali Mahyuddin

2 November 2023 - Alumni Relation Center UPM

Prof. Ar. Mohd Razali Mahyuddin or Tok Wan is the first architect to sketch the original design of Warisan Budi Clock Tower. His valuable sharing about the initial concept of the clock tower will also be included in Coffee Table Book.



Get-Together for Graduating Recipients and UPM Alumni Scholarship Sponsors

4 November 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia Campus Bintulu (UPMKB)

A get-together with the UPM@Bintulu 2023 alumni scholarship sponsors and the graduated scholarship recipients was organized to further strengthen relationships and also to give space and time for a sharing session between them.



ARC-CS Podcast: Alumni Berilmu Berbakti

9 November 2023 - Galeri Putra

ARC-CS Podcast: Alumni Berilmu Berbakti featuring two invited panelists, Prof. Emeritus Dr. Abdul Rahman Md. Aroff (Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor HEPA 1999-2000) and Mr. Haji Yahaya Salim (Former Head of BHEP Division 1998-2001), along with the podcast host, Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar (Deputy Director of ARCUPM).



Putrabiz@Alumni: Pesta Konvokesyen dan Pertanian UPM (PESKON 23)

25 November - 2 December 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

Putrabiz@Alumni also participated in the UPM Convocation and Agriculture Festival (PESKON 23) by opening a flower sales booth. The objective of participating in PESKON was to collect funds for the Yayasan Pak Rashid (YPR) fund, in addition to being one of the fundraising activities for CSA.

CSA Appreciation Ceremony for the 2022/2023 Session and CSA Appointment for the 2023/2024 Session

6 November 2023 - Balai Minda, Kolej Sultan Alaeddin Suleiman Shah (KOSASS), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

The Appreciation Ceremony is to celebrate CSA members for the 2022/2023 session who have contributed a lot of ideas, energy and time to each CSA program and helped ARCUPM in establishing relationships with UPM alumni.



Highlights



Chapter Negeri Sembilan Ukhuwah Programme

7 November 2023 - Lavender Height, Negeri Sembilan

Before the end of 2023, Chapter Negeri Sembilan held an Ukhuwah Programme as their annual programme to reunite the Chapter Negeri Sembilan members. Among those present were Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM; Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed, Secretary General of PAUPM; Hj. Kamari Zaman Juhari, PAUPM Exco; and Hj. Wan Ali W Ab Rahman, PAUPM Manager.



Concern with Global Issues, ARCUPM Organizes 'Solidariti UPM Untukmu Palestin' Programme

10 November 2023 - Dewan Putra 1, Kolej Tan Sri Aishah Ghani UPM

ARCUPM in collaboration with Chapter Alumni Yosh UPM along with strategic partners has organized "Solidariti UPM Untukmu Palestin" Programme which has gained support from almost 400 UPM students, alumni and staff to show compassion and empathy toward Palestinian that are being oppressed by the Zionist on their own land.



Biochemistry Homecoming Seminar

9 November 2023 - UPM

The Biochemistry Homecoming Seminar was held at the Faculty of Biotechnology and Molecular Sciences, UPM. This seminar was held to demonstrate the students of this faculty to the needs of today's industry.



Farm FRESH®



Highlights



MEKAR 17th Series: College of Agriculture Malaya 1971 and UPM's Golden Jubilee Celebration

12 November 2023 - UPM's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) Building

This reunion was a collaboration of ARCUPM with Dr. Mohd Khanif Yusof and Dr. Zaitun Md Yasin, both are alumni of the class of 1971 and was attended by more than 50 alumni from College of Agriculture Malaya 1971. Also present were Pro Chancellor of UPM, Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr. Ir. Muhammad Zohadie Bardaie (Alumni class 1971) and Founder of Brahim's Group, Dato' Seri Ibrahim Haji Ahmad Badawi (Alumni class 1971).



Discussion between GNI Pharma, Faculty of Agriculture UPM and Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences UPM

17 November 2023 - PAUPM

PAUPM has been pleased to arrange a discussion between GNI Pharma Sdn. Bhd. with the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UPM at the PAUPM Meeting Room. The discussion revolved around cooperation in terms of plant and product research and the future of herb-based products in Malaysia. PAUPM very much welcomes activities like this to further strengthen industry relations with UPM as *alma mater*.



Trace Alumni District @ Batu Pahat: UTHM

19 November 2023 - Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM)

ARCUPM continues to be committed in carrying out activities and programs to bring alumni back to their alma mater. Through TRACE, ARCUPM managed to track alumni who are currently serving at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM). Alumni also shared their knowledge and experience with CSA students about their experiences while studying. Thank you UTHM for welcoming ARCUPM and CSA students.



BIASISWA ALUMNI

**25
PENAJA
69
PENERIMA**



**BIASISWA SETERUSNYA?
SILA HUBUNGI KAMI UNTUK TURUT SAMA
MENJADI PENYUMBANG BIASISWA**



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untuk maklumat
lanjut**

**PUSAT PERHUBUNGAN ALUMNI
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Highlights

Honorable Visit to YBhg. Prof. Emeritus Dato' Dr. Ibrahim Komoo, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Universiti Putra Malaysia

22 November 2023 - UPM

PAUPM held a courtesy visit to YBhg. Prof. Emeritus Dato' Dr. Ibrahim Komoo, Chairman of UPM Board of Directors at the UPM Chancellery Building. The courtesy visit was held with the aim of maintaining good relations between PAUPM and the University Management Board. Among the suggestions mentioned to strengthen cooperation between UPM and PAUPM through ARCUPM are collaboration in creating the UPM Alumni building, suggesting that UPM name certain buildings on campus with the names of UPM's Distinguished Alumni, and urging more UPM alumni who are currently serving in the university to be active with PAUPM.



Nurul Syazwani Mohamed Zabidi as the First Recipient of Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Award

25 November 2023 - Central Academic Lecturer Hall (DKAP)

Nurul Syazwani Mohamed Zabidi, UPM Alumni Class of 2023 graduate of Bachelor of Business Administration was the first recipient of the Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Award during the 47th UPM Convocation Ceremony, the Second Conference, in the first session. This award was presented by the Chancellor of UPM, His Majesty Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj Ibni Almarhum Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Alhaj. The Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Award is a new University Award sponsored by the Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Fund (TESIS). The TESIS Fund and this award are the first to be introduced and managed by ARCUPM.



Awarded with Pak Rashid Foundation's Gold Medal, DK Anisah is Touched

25 November 2023 - Central Academic Lecturer Hall (DKAP)

DK Anisah Khoirunnisaa' PG Kamaluddin, a graduate from Bachelor of Agricultural Science Class 2023 has been named as the 20th receiver of Pak Rashid Foundation Gold Medal during the 47th UPM Convocation Ceremony. On 13th March 2003, UPM approved the proposal to establish Pak Rashid Foundation Gold Medal as a university level award to pay homage to the late Pak Rashid for his continuous service and support for UPM. This award is given to notable students who fulfill the criteria according to the consideration of the University Prize Committee. Starting from alumni session 2002 up to session 2023, there are 20 students and graduates that have been awarded with university main awards as notable students through Pak Rashid Foundation Gold Medal.



Ummu Qatrunnada Liyana Kamaruddin Receives Farm Fresh Food Security Award at UPM 47th Convocation Ceremony

25 November 2023 - Central Academic Lecturer Hall (DKAP)

Ummu Qatrunnada Liyana Kamaruddin, a Bachelor of Agricultural Science graduate and also one of Alumni Class 2023, has been awarded as the first recipient of Farm Fresh Food Security Award during UPM 47th Convocation Ceremony. This award, which is introduced for the first time, is also one of the university's main awards and prizes managed by ARCUPM.



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Alumni Card Distribution in Conjunction with 47th UPM Convocation Ceremony 2023

25 November – 2 December 2023 - Central Academic Lecturer Hall (DKAP)

During the 47th UPM Convocation Ceremony, PAUPM set up the booth in front of Dewan Kuliah Akademik Pusat (DKAP) to assist with the distribution of alumni cards for graduates. During this ceremony, 6,051 graduates received their degrees and diplomas, including 520 PhDs, 1,532 Master Degrees, 3,988 Bachelor Degrees, and 11 diplomas. Congratulations!



Solidariti UPM Untukmu Palestin': UPM X Myfundaction Fund Collection Handover

7 December 2023 - UPM's Serdang Briefing Hall

The UPM X MyFundAction fund was created along with the UPM Solidarity Program for Palestine. The handover of the collection fund with the total of RM 32,202.14 was completed by UPM Vice Chancellor, Dato' Prof. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah to the representative of MyFundAction, Miss Athirah Mohd Affandi. Overall, this fund is managed by MyFundAction to be channeled to the Palestinian people who are in dire need of help and support at the moment.



UPM 47th Convocation Ceremony

25-30 November 2023 - Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

With the end of Conference 2 which lasted for 6 days from 25 November to 30 November 2023, the 47th UPM Convocation Ceremony was a success. Conference 1 was held at Dewan Sri Kenyalang, UPM Bintulu Campus on 4 November 2023 involved 487 graduates, while Conference 2 was held at the Great Hall of the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Shah Cultural and Art Center, UPM Serdang Campus involved 6051 graduates.

Along with the convocation ceremony, a convocation festival was also held at both campuses. The 47th Konvokesyen@UPMKB Agricultural Expo Festival was held at the Expo Site, Dewan Sri Kenyalang UPMKB from 2 November to 5 November 2023. UPM Serdang Campus also held the UPM Agricultural Expo and Convocation Festival located around the UPM Putra Chancellery Building which was officially launched on 24 November and lasted until 1 December 2023. Among the activities held during this convocation festival are agricultural products sales, agricultural research exhibitions, food festivals, stage performances and many more. Recreational activities such as archery, shooting, flying fox and kayaking were also held and received an encouraging response from the visitors.

Cheque Presentation to Alumni Gold Medal Recipient

27 November 2023 - UPM Alumni Association

Congratulations to Tan Pei Qin, the Alumni Gold Medal recipient for the year 2023, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology with Honours. Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM, was pleased to present a cheque amounting to RM4,000 to Tan Pei Qin. Starting this year, the gold medal prize amount has been increased from RM3,000 to RM4,000.00. Also participating, YAM. Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Jamalullail presented a cheque amounting to RM 4,000.00 to the Razlan Putra Gold Medal recipient, Jonathan Nyepa, a Bachelor of Science (Human Resource Development) graduate who is active in the 100m and 200m athletics.





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2

Penaja diberikan keutamaan dalam memilih
bakal penerima

3

Ruang iklan disediakan di dalam setiap
program ARCUPM

4

Satu slot pengiklanan syarikat disediakan
dalam penerbitan Majalah Serdang Sun

5

Senarai nama penyumbang alumni akan
dipaparkan dalam Majalah Serdang Sun

6

Dijemput untuk Majlis Makan Malam Sirih
Pulang ke Gagang@Homecoming

7

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Untuk Maklumat Lanjut, Sila Hubungi:

ARCUPM : 03 9769 1260

En. Norfarhan : 019 735 9677

Pn. Aida Farhana : 010 836 0072

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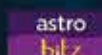
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3

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2

Penaja diberikan keutamaan dalam memilih bakal penerima

3

Ruang iklan disediakan di dalam setiap program ARCUPM

4

Satu slot pengiklanan syarikat disediakan dalam penerbitan Majalah Serdang Sun

5

Senarai nama penyumbang alumni akan dipaparkan dalam Majalah Serdang Sun

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Dijemput untuk Majlis Makan Malam Sirih Pulang ke Gagang@Homecoming

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Sijil Penghargaan dan Pengiktirafan oleh UPM

Untuk Maklumat Lanjut, Sila Hubungi:

ARCUPM : 03 9769 1260

En. Norfarhan : 019 735 9677

Pn. Aida Farhana : 010 836 0072

Bersama Berbakti Kepada Alma Mater



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Warganegara / Nationality
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Item	Program/ Programme	Fakulti/ Faculty	Tahun Graduat/ Graduate Year
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PhD			

* Sila sertakan satu salinan sijil pengajian terkini di UPM /
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Cek / <i>Cheque</i>	No. Cek / <i>Cheque No. :</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tunai / <i>Cash</i>	RM :
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pembayaran atas talian / <i>Online Transfer</i>	RM : Reference No. :

Cek/ kiriman wang boleh dibayar atas nama "Persatuan Alumni UPM"
No Akaun CIMB 8002150285

Cheque/ postal order payable to "Persatuan Alumni UPM" CIMB
Account No. 8002150285

Tandatangan / *Signature*

Untuk Kegunaan Pejabat / *For Office Use*
Permohonan diluluskan / *Application approved,*

Tidak diluluskan / *Not Approved*

Tarikh diluluskan / *Approve date :* _____

No. Keahlian / *Membership number :* _____

*Sila Sertakan bersama salinan Diploma/
Ijazah anda.

*Please attach your Diploma/ Bachelor
certificate copy here.

Persatuan Alumni UPM (PAUPM)
Aras Bawah, Bangunan Timbalan Naib Canselor
(Penyelidikan & Inovasi), Off Lebuhr Silikon
Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang
Selangor Darul Ehsan

☎ 03 9769 1255/ 7242/ 7243/ 7244

✉ alumniupm@gmail.com

🌐 <http://www.paupmnetwork.my>

📘 Persatuan Alumni UPM-PAUPM

MENARA JAM WARISAN BUDI PUTRA UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA



**TERIMA KASIH ATAS SUMBANGAN
PARA ALUMNI & SEMUA WARGA UPM
“DARIPADA ALUMNI KEPADA UPM”**

**IMBAS KOD QR
UNTUK MENYUMBANG**





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Ground Floor Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor
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Universiti Putra Malaysia
Off Lebuh Silikon
43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor

☎ Tel : 03-9769 1017
✉ Email : alumni@upm.edu.my
🌐 Website : <http://www.alumni.upm.edu.my>

📍 **UPM Alumni Association (PAUPM)**
Ground Floor Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Research and Innovation)
Universiti Putra Malaysia
Off Lebuh Silikon
43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor

☎ Tel : 03-9769 7242/ 7243/ 7244
✉ Email : alumniupm@gmail.com
🌐 Website : <http://www.paupmnetwork.my>