



It's hot! (foreground, fourth from left to second from right) Idris, Treadell, Prof Parker and Prof Mohd Fauzi examining a solar-powered car at UPM.

Taking off to greener skies

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MENTION the name “Rolls-Royce” and a luxury vehicle bearing a silver emblem with overlapping ‘R’s will come to mind.

Although the British company formed by Charles Stewart Rolls and Sir Frederick Henry Royce started out as a car manufacturer, it soon went into manufacturing engines for aeroplanes.

It has now been about a century since the company has been involved in creating aero-engines and their engines are now common sights in several Boeing and Airbus models.

This is proof that the group is a major player in the aerospace industry.

And there’s no question that the group’s director of research and technology Prof Richard Parker is a leading expert in the field of aerospace engineering.

So, it comes as no surprise that he was chosen as the first industry expert to give the CEO @ UPM Faculty Programme lecture at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

The lecture was attended by about 400 new students of the varsity’s engineering faculty.

The lecture was also streamed live to other faculties, including the UPM campus in Bintulu, Sarawak.

The lecture, titled “Clean Sky, Green Sky”, focused on Rolls-Royce’s technological innovations to reduce its impact on the environment.

He kept the audience enthralled with a brief history of the group and slides showcasing the latest aero-engines designed by Rolls-Royce.

There was even a video of how an air molecule moves through the engine’s fans and compressors before “bidding farewell to the aeroplane”.

Prof Parker also spoke about the research collaborations carried out by the group with Malaysian universities, including UPM.

Both Rolls-Royce and UPM are leading members of the Aerospace Malaysia Innovation Centre.

Malaysia was on the same journey towards becoming an aerospace hub, he said, adding that the nation was on the right path.

This, he added, was demonstrated by the recently launched Malaysian Aerospace Industry Blueprint 2015-2030.

Among the targets of the blueprint is for Malaysia to become the leading aerospace hub in Southeast Asia by 2030.

Throughout his lecture, Prof Parker stressed on the importance of using technology to create the balance between growth of the aviation industry and carbon

dioxide reduction.

“Global warming is real and aviation makes a small but significant contribution,” he said.

He also said that although competition is rife in the industry, research on reducing environmental impact is an area “competitors come together, it’s not an area you compete on”.

Speaking about the CEO Faculty Programme, Prof Parker said he was honoured to be part of the programme under the Higher Education Ministry.

“I think it is an extremely adventurous and important programme here in Malaysia,” he said, adding that Rolls-Royce had a history of working with universities and is looking forward to building the same relationships in Malaysia.

UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Fauzi Ramlan said the CEO Faculty Programme is another step towards the integration of academia and industry.

“It will bring some of the most distinguished captains of industry from both Malaysia and abroad to undergraduates in our public universities, with whom they will share their ideas, expertise and experiences,” he said.

Also present at the lecture was Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh. He said he was proud to see the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) reaping results through the CEO Faculty Programme.

“There will be more of these lectures, especially since public institutes of higher learning have just started their new semesters,” he said.

Idris stressed that this puts to rest the question of when the Blueprint would come into effect.

“In just five months, we have seen it come into effect,” he said.

British High Commissioner to Malaysia Vicki Treadell encouraged more British companies that are active in Malaysia to step forward and take part in the CEO Faculty Programme.

The CEO Faculty Programme is part of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) where industry leaders are brought into public universities to conduct lectures.

The chosen CEOs are selected as adjunct professors or distinguished industry fellows and will conduct 30 hours of lectures.

At a previous event, Idris said more science, mathematics and technology books in Bahasa Malaysia should be made available.

“Books on science, mathematics and technology will really help bring Malaysia to new heights,” he said when officiating the 15th International Conference on Translation in Kuala Lumpur.

Idris also hoped more public institutions of higher learning would help gather and translate science, mathematics and technology reading materials into the national language.

“Almost all these universities have a translation department,” he said.

However, Idris added, this did not mean publishing books and journals in English should be stopped.

“Publishing in both languages can be done concurrently,” he said, adding that not much additional resources would be needed.