

Varsity and AirAsia take higher learning to the skies

SEPANG: Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), one of the nation's five research universities, has taken to the skies.

For the past two weeks, an Airbus A320-200 aircraft bearing the university's logo and iconic rain tree has been flying passengers to destinations locally and abroad.

UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datin Paduka Dr Aini Ideris said the prominent display of the varsity's livery and colours stemmed from Tan Sri Tony Fernandes' branding approach and the importance he places on educational institutions and exploration of knowledge.

She said this at the launch of the UPM-AirAsia Livery yesterday.

AirAsia Group chief executive officer Fernandes said UPM was the first university in the world to have its livery displayed on an airplane.

He added that there would always be UPM's livery on AirAsia aircraft, though the design might change from time to time. The livery cost about US\$50,000 (RM200,000), he said.

Fernandes said he chose UPM as he appreciated their enthusiasm and willingness to work together.

"This is the result of action," he said, adding that this livery was 18 months in the making.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh said the milestone was the result of the ministry's CEO@Faculty programme, which Fernandes is a part of.