

Record 15 M'sian varsities qualify for Asia Rankings

PETALING JAYA: A record 15 Malaysian universities qualified for the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2021, compared to eight last year.

The 2021 edition sees Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) making a huge leap by jumping two bands to achieve its first-ever top 200 finish.

The ninth edition of the international university rankings also sees Universiti Kuala Lumpur and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka making their debut in the 401+ band, and five out of six Malaysia's top-performing universities improving or maintaining their positions.

Universiti Teknologi Petronas moved up 13 places to the 111th rank, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman maintains its position at 119th, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) climbs nine places to finish at 136th and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) climbs 10 places to 150th.

Although Universiti Malaya (UM) dropped six places, it still ranks in the top 50. THE Chief Knowledge Officer Phil Baty said these rankings are an important measure of the strength of higher educa-

tion across the continent.

"It is great to see a number of Malaysia's universities improve or maintain their previous ranking positions, despite the growing competitiveness across the region.

"Achieving a top 50 position in these rankings is a great achievement, but to do so for four consecutive years, as UM has, is testament to its strengths nationally, regionally and globally.

"It will be interesting to see what happens in Malaysia over the coming years, and how universities adapt to the post-Covid world," he said in a statement on Wednesday (June 2).

Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, he said there may be an opportunity for Malaysian universities to attract and retain more regional students and academic staff as disruption to traditional talent flow continues.

This year, 551 universities rank in total compared to 489 in 2020, with China's Tsinghua University and Peking University claiming the first and second spot while Singapore's National University of Singapore takes third place.