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Students doing assignments at the Institute of Chinese Studies
U TAR received its first ranking of #111-120 by the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2017 on 16 March 2017. Then, on 5 April 2017, the Times Higher Education ranked UTAR #101-150 in the Times Higher Education Young Universities Rankings 2017. UTAR was also ranked #14 in the Times Higher Education Young Universities Rankings 2017: Million universities. Despite taking part for the first time, UTAR’s placing in the rankings reflected the immense efforts and strategies put in place by the University since its inception in 2002. On the THE rankings, commented by the University, UTAR President Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuah Hean Teik, commented that, “It is a recognition of Malaysia’s higher education especially for private higher education. Our Malaysian government liberalised the higher education sector thus, giving us this opportunity to do our best. Therefore, we are thankful to the government and the Ministry of Higher Education. It is also a recognition to all UTAR believers and benefactors who contributed to the UTAR Education Foundation. Being a private non-profit university, we strive to keep our tuition fees affordable while providing our students with quality education, soft skills training and technical competencies.”

The Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2017 and #101-150 in the THE Young Universities Rankings 2017 are based on 13 separate performance indicators in the areas of teaching, research, paper citation, knowledge transfer and international outlook. It is a pleasant surprise since we are only 15 years old, and we are thankful for the support and shall continue to work hard and improve ourselves,” said Prof Chuah.

THE Young University Rankings, are a ranking of world’s top 200 universities under 50 years old. Institutions which demonstrate high standards of performance across teaching, research, international outlook and knowledge transfer are featured in the list.

UTAR awarded self-accreditation status

UTAR added another feather to its cap when it was awarded the self-accreditation status by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) on 20 March 2017. According to MQA, the self-accreditation status authorises a higher education provider to do its own self-assessment and accredit its programmes in accordance to the criteria set by the MQA, excluding some programmes that require a professional body’s recognition.

UTAR is one of the eight higher learning institutions which received the self-accreditation status on 20 March 2017. The other seven universities which received the self-accreditation status were Universiti Teknologi MARA, Universiti Teknologi Petronas, International Medical University, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia, Universiti Tenaga Nasional and Multimedia University.

The MQA conducted a thorough and rigorous institutional audit prior to the conferment of the status. This self-accreditation status is awarded to higher education providers which have demonstrated a strong and stable internal quality assurance system. According to Minister of Higher Education, Dato’ Sri Idris bin Jusoh, the self-accreditation status is awarded to top performing universities or institutions, and they have more autonomy in running their own academic programmes.

The self-accreditation system for Malaysian public and private universities was first introduced by MOHE in 2010. It was designed to encourage growth in Malaysia’s higher education landscape. The first batch of recipients of the self-accreditation status included Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Monash University Malaysia, University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Curtin University Sarawak and Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak.

MoU for Unity Internship Programme

UTAR together with other four private universities and seven government-linked companies (GLCs) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Unity Internship Programme (Program Latihan Industri Perpaduan, PLIP) at its Sungai Long Campus on 11 April 2017. The private universities signing the MoU were UTAR, Asia Pacific University, HELP University, SEGI University and Taylor’s University. The GLC signees were Amanah Raya Berhad, Bank Simpanan Nasional, Indah Water Konsortium Sdn Bhd, Perbadanan Nasional Berhad, Pharmacia, Plus Malaysia Berhad, and Proton-Holdings. The MoU signing ceremony was witnessed by Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Tan Sri Dato’ Sri Panglima Joseph Kurup. Also present at the signing were UTAR Chancellor Tun Dr Ling Sik and spouse Toh Puan Ena Ling, UTAR Council Chairman Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Dr Ting Chew Pew, UTAR President Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuah Hean Teik, Prime Minister’s Department of National Unity and Integration (Jabatan Perpaduan Negara dan Integrasi Nasional), JPNIN Affairs Adviser Datuk Heng Seai Kie, JPNIN Director General Tan Buen Ban in Idris, JPNIN Deputy Director General for Planning Akhtina @ Mimi O-P Andu, as well as representatives from the GLCs and universities.

Following its success at phase one, PLIP (Phase 2) enables non-bumiputra students to receive internship training in the industries programme also allows them to experience working with all the races. Prof Chuah said, “It is with great delight that we officially sign the MoU to establish a strong foundation for a sustainable partnership. I am sure it will bring more fruitful activities that will strengthen the relationship between UTAR, JPNIN and the GLCs in Malaysia.”

Tan Sri Joseph Kurup said, “The main objective of this programme is to bring people of all races together. We hope to enhance unity in our country by reducing misunderstanding and prejudice between bumiputras and non-bumiputras.”

MoU with Tianjin University

U TAR and Tianjin University (TJU) officially exchanged a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Sungai Long Campus on 7 March 2017, marking another milestone in UTAR’s pursuit of global international partnerships.

The guests from Tianjin University were its School of International Education Dean Prof Chen Zhihua, School of Civil Engineering’s Prof Lam Wei Haur, International Admissions Office’s Zhai Hong Yuan, and School of Science’s Cheng Shan Shan.

Prof Chuah said, “UTAR was set up in 2002 and has campuses in Sungai Long and Kampar. Though a young university, we strive to actively involve ourselves in international exchanges and collaborations to boost the university’s growth. UTAR is currently associated with 143 higher learning institutions worldwide and 35 of them are from China. Through this MoU exchange with TJU, I look forward to a greater international academic partnership which will benefit more students.”

Citing TJU’s history, Prof Chen enthused, “TJU was founded in 1895 and is the oldest institution of higher education in the modern history of China. Our university is also the pioneer in a number of fields such as chemical engineering. Similar to UTAR, we also emphasise on internationalisation and consistently expand our partnerships with universities, industries and companies across the globe. I am glad that we are able to visit UTAR and exchange this MoU that brings about more active academic interactions.”

Both UTAR and TJU will seek for collaborations in scholarships, student and faculty exchange programmes, cultural and artistic exchange activities, and joint research.
The two-day WOW Kampar festival, officially started on 24 March 2017 at the Sports@Grand Kampar Complex. The inaugural festival, co-organised with the Kampar District Council (MDKpr), was a worthwhile experience for 203 UTAR Public Relations students following a record-busting turnout of over 50,000 visitors. “It was quite challenging but thankfully we had great support throughout our four-month planning process,” said WOW Kampar Organising Chairperson Chan Shu Ting. “The festival, held in conjunction with ‘Visit Perak Year 2017’, kicked-off with a launching ceremony, which saw the presence of Tourism Committee Chairman Dato’ Nolee Ashilin Mohd Radzi, Orang Besar Jajahan Kampar Toh Sedewa Raja Dato’ Hij Abdul, Taib bin Abd Fahmri, MDKpr President Khairul Amir bin Mohamad Zubir, UTAR Council Member Hew Fen Yee, UTAR Vice President Prof Dr Cheong Chee Keong, and Faculty of Arts and Social Science Dean Dr Alia Azalea.

“We want it to become an annual event to keep the legacy of Kampar and promote its uniqueness,” said Dato’ Nolee. Prof Choong, who represented UTAR President Ir Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chua Hain Teik said, “I am very proud of the organising committee’s efforts. The university has emphasised on educating students to have a serviceable heart. Therefore, the WOW Kampar festival is a great way for students to contribute to the society.” The highlights of the event were the tin mining history exhibition, sports competition, food bazaar, and blood and hair donation campaigns. The closing ceremony was attended by UTAR Vice President Dr Choong Chee Keong. The WOW Kampar organising committee

**Visitors WOW-ed by festival**

Leong, Toh Sedewa Raja Dato’ Hij Abdul, Khaizir Amir, Grand Kampar Hotel General Manager Shirley Cheong and Dr Alia Dato’ Lees said, “I believe WOW Kampar is a benchmark event for Kampar. This event will contribute to Kampar’s economy and bring up the reputation of this destination.”

**Official launch of TalentHub Program**

UTAR hosted the TalentHub Program for the first time and it was officially launched at the Kampar Campus on 13 April 2017. Initiated by the Deputy Minister of Finance II Senator Dato’ Lee Chee Leong, the TalentHub Program aims to be a strategic platform for students to engage with industry players, gain corporate and industry experience as well as empower the students with many career opportunities available. It is open to the public and students from all education institutions.

Invited to launch the TalentHub Program was Dato’ Lee. Also present at the launching ceremony were UTAR Vice President Prof Dr Cheong Chee Keong representing UTAR President Ir Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chua Hain Teik, UTAR Faculty of Business and Finance Deputy Dean Dr Lau Lin Sea, Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology Deputy Dean Dr Lo Po Kim, Institute of Chinese Studies Deputy Dean Dr Ling Long Ngo, Dato’ Lees’ Special Assistant Daniel Wei Hui How, and representatives from companies and organisations.

Prof Choong said, “On behalf of the UTAR President, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Dato’ Lee for having UTAR as the Education Partner for this program. This TalentHub Program is a strategic platform for fresh graduates and students to look for employment and vice versa.”

Dato’ Lee said, “Through this program, the students will stand a chance to serve in top-notch corporations, acquire first-hand knowledge in specific fields, and attend training offered by industry experts as well as receive Certificate of Achievement awarded by UTAR.”

The programme started with a ceaseless industrial talk conducted by the participated companies called, “Hired or Fired”. The slot was aimed to interview potential candidates spontaneously and hire them to work. The programme ended with a series of industrial talk conducted by the participated companies.

**UTAR and the University System of Taiwan (UST) reached new heights in their partnership when a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for a mutual credit recognition programme on 18 March 2017 at Kampar Campus.**

UTAR and the University System of Taiwan (UST) reached new heights in their partnership when a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for a mutual credit recognition programme on 18 March 2017 at Kampar Campus. Signing on behalf of UTAR was President Ir Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chua Hain Teik, while signing on behalf of UST was Chancellor Prof Dr Chyi Jen-Inn, Dr Christopher Drew, and ITPAC Director Dr Christopher Drew said, “I believe WOW Kampar is a benchmark event for Kampar. This event will contribute to Kampar’s economy and bring up the reputation of this destination.”
UTAR Centre for Sustainable Architecture organised an urban heritage workshop and product expo named “Jom Makan Angin” from 19 to 24 February 2017 in collaboration with Tunghai University (THU), Taiwan. "Jom Makan Angin" involved the contextual analysis of the architecture of Malacca and Kuala Lumpur through the eyes of an architect. It was conducted in groups, where each group studied the heritage and social issues and conducted a SWOT analysis. The delegates from THU consisted of 30 students and four lecturers, who were Dr Huang Shao Yu, Dr Hsueh Meng-Chi, Dr Chen Lin-Wei and Kao Ding-Shyang, while UTAR was represented by 37 students and six lecturers, namely Department of Architecture and Sustainable Design Head Tan Kok Hong, Centre for Sustainable Architecture Chairperson Dr Lim Poh Im, and Architecture lecturers Ar Soong Mew Sin, Ar Ching Yan, and Abdul Muluk bin Abdul Rahman and Abdul Rahim bin Mohd Zin.

UTAR student facilitators Goh Ee Xuan and Phua Yu said, “TCUST has fostered a very close relationship with UTAR over the years. To further enhance our collaboration, I wish to invite UTAR lecturers to TCUST to gain short-term teaching experience. Through our close collaboration, we hope to prepare our students to meet the entry requirements needed in order to study master’s or PhD programmes in Malaysia.”

UTAR-Alibaba Entrepreneur Project

UCUST fosters closer collaboration

A group of delegates from the Tzu Chi University of Science and Technology (UCUST), our MoU partner since 1 May 2012, paid a visit to the Sungai Long Campus on 20 January 2017. The UCUST delegation comprised of College of Health Technology Management Dean Assoc Prof Dr Yu Kun-Tzu, Department of Health Administration Chairman Assoc Prof Dr Lan Yu-Li, Department of Information Technology and Management Chairman Dr Tu Shin-Chih, Tzu Chi Education Foundation Specialist Albert Wang, representatives from Tzu Chi Foundation Malaysia and students representatives.

They were warmly welcomed by UTAR Vice President Prof Dr Lee Sze Wei, Division of Community and International Networking Director Prof Dr Cheng Ming Yu, Faculty of Accountancy and Management Dean Dr Sia Bee Chuan, Lee Kong Chian Faculty of Engineering and Science Deputy Dean Assoc Prof Dr Lai Soon Onn, Faculty of Creative Industries Deputy Dean Aloysius Yapp, and Faculty of Business and Finance Deputy Dean Peter Tan Sinn Howe.

The meeting commenced with a discussion on potential collaborative areas such as overseas industrial training for students, staff and student exchanges, educational tour, short-term academic activities and postgraduate programmes.

Prof Lee said, “I believe Malaysia is the best place for Taiwanese students to learn English and receive vocational training, which is crucial for Taiwan. I also believe our Student Exchange Programme and Overseas Internship Programme would be ideal collaborations with TCUST.”

Yu said, “TCUST has fostered a very close relationship with UTAR over the years. To further enhance our collaboration, I wish to invite UTAR lecturers to TCUST to gain short-term teaching experience. Through our close collaboration, we hope to prepare our students to meet the entry requirements needed in order to study master’s or PhD programmes in Malaysia.”

Urban heritage workshop with THU

The university launched UTAR- Alibaba Entrepreneur Project as a tradition of giving back to the society. The objective of this project was to promote and expand new village businesses on e-commerce platforms.

The UTAR New Village Project has attracted a great number of volunteers to study the needs, challenges and opportunities of new villages in Malaysia. The UTAR- Alibaba Entrepreneur Project came about when the participants found a business opportunity for the locally produced products. UTAR and Alibaba.com signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 6 September 2016 to better equip UTAR students and staff as well as Malaysian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with e-commerce knowledge.

Faculty of Accountancy and Management (FAM) Deputy Dean Dr Hen Kai Wah, FAM Head Dr Cham Tat Huei, FAM Head Low Chin Kian, FAM Lecturer Yang Kin Leong, and Lee Kong Chian Faculty of Engineering and Science Head Dr Wong Weng Yee had volunteered to assist the project as consultants and advisors to the students. Department of Soft Skills Competency (DSSC) Head Fook Oi Yee said, “SMEs are operating in the new village, but they lack e-commerce knowledge. Their products should be introduced outside. Therefore, DSSC collaborated with a few departments and faculties to help the SMEs to sell their products using e-commerce.”

Dr Hen said, “One of the biggest challenges encountered was how to motivate all the stakeholders in the project, on the benefits of e-commerce. In my opinion, e-commerce business models are constantly evolving. Hence, students should be more creative and innovative to utilise it.”

Dr Wong remarked, “It was difficult to approach the SMEs because they were comfortable with their existing business model. We tried to show them how powerful e-commerce is by promoting their products through it. Although they may not be able to sell their products online, at least more people gets insight about their products.”

Collaborations at Work

Engineering and Science Fiesta 2017

The Engineering and Science Fiesta (ESF) 2017 was held at Sungai Long Campus from 20 to 23 February 2017. Themed ‘A Glimpse into the Future’, the event aimed to cultivate interest of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

“In the face of declining interest in STEM, I am glad to know that our students are taking a proactive role in promoting STEM. Our nation requires good engineers, scientists, technologists and mathematicians to evolve,” said UTAR President Ir Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuaa Han Teik.

By displaying some innovative and creative projects, I hope to inspire more students to take up STEM programmes,” said ESF 2017 Chairperson Lai Jia Shern.

KakiDIY Founder Johnson Lam said the fiesta shared similar aspirations with KakiDIY, cultivating interest and training people in the aforementioned areas to create innovative and creative inventions. This four-day fiesta also featured a career fair where 80 renowned companies and creative inventions.

This four-day fiesta also featured a career fair where 80 renowned companies and creative inventions.

Another THU student, Cheng Ke Hsuan said, “I am grateful that UTAR students and lecturers are so friendly and helpful. I gained some useful insights into Malaya’s culture and historical landmarks.”

Muluk said, “Through this event, both parties were able to exchange ideas and knowledge. I hope we can organise similar activities in future.”

LOW (left) giving training to students
Collaborations at Work

UtAR’s participation in the Jelajah Forum & Ekspo Mampan (JFEM) 2017 from 18 to 19 February 2017 at the RTC Gopeng, Perak, further shed light on the importance of promoting sustainable development across the country.

UtAR collaborated with JFEM to increase the public’s awareness on sustainable development, enrich entrepreneurs’ ideas, inspire the public’s innovation, spur cooperation among society, and to create a sustainable future.

The opening ceremony saw the presence of Perak State Executive Councilor for Education, Science, Environment and Green Technology Datuk Dr Haji Muhammad Amin bin Haji Zakaria, Persatuan Cakna Ekonomi Anak Perak Chairman Rossaini bin Ahmad Noor Razal, and JFEM Secretarial Chairperson Ahmad Ruzizzan Maghillindo bin Mohd Issa.

Fifty-eight students and 13 staff from UtAR took part in the expo. The booths that were set up included those from the Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology (FEGT), Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Faculty of Science (FSc), Centre for Extension Education, Division of Programme Promotion, and Department of Soft Skills Competency Kampar. More than 300 visitors drop by the booths.

The UtAR students also attended the forum, titled “Impak Pemanasan Global – Bandar Rendah Karbon Sebagai Solusi”, where FEGT Deputy Dean Dr Ng Choon Aun was invited as one of the panelists. Another forum, titled “Transformasi Miniatur dan Ushahawan Mengangkarkan Tiga Unsur: Keuntungan, Manusia dan Bumi”, was conducted later in the afternoon.

Another group of UtAR students volunteered for other activities, in which they helped to clean the surrounding area of RTC Gopeng. Perak Executive Councilor Dato’ Shahirah Rusnah binti Kassim, JFEM Director Ramlan bin Harun and Ahmad Ruzizza expressed their good wishes during the closing ceremony. Also present at the closing ceremony were UtAR Vice President Prof Dr Choong Chee Keong and FSc Dean Dr Lim Tuck Meng.

UTAR and MIDAS Information Technology Co Ltd (MIDAS IT) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at UTAR Sungai Long Campus on 17 April 2017.

Signing on behalf of the parties were UTAR President Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuah Hean Telk and MIDAS IT Regional Manager Kampung Jung Won. Witnessing the signing were Vice President Prof Dr Ewe Hong Tat and MIDAS IT Asia-Pacific Regional Manager Kiwon Kim. The other UTAR representatives present at the MoU signing were Lee Kong Chian Faculty of Engineering and Science (KLC FES) Dean Prof Dr Gork Bok Min with his Deputy Dean Dr Lai Soon Onn, Adjunct Specialist Ir Hee Ming Chor, Department of Laboratory Management and Safety Administration Head Dr Lim Jee Hock, Department of Civil Engineering Head Ir Dr Lim Siong Kang, KLC FES lecturers Yip Chun Chieh, Dr Lai See Hung, Dr Lee Yee Ling and Dr Ling Lloyd.

UTAR is the first university to collaborate with MIDAS IT in building a better future for the stakeholders. Both parties hope to establish a collaborative partnership for mutual benefits including training, internship, research and further development of students as well as staff. Prof Chuah said: "Today’s MoU will open doors to opportunities for students and staff to participate in developing new methods and ideas for teaching and learning in engineering software applications, technology and analysis. This also serves as a good opportunity to work with the industry with the objective to contribute to the society and in developing our country."

"I really look forward to continue the support of this initiative so that young engineers can be better off and have early experience before they start their career. This would encourage the younger generation to be more proficient and professional in their areas by using the software," said Kang.

Collaboration with JFEM

Study visit by GAI

The delegates at KAJ Development’sMelaka Gateway showroom

Timber industry. The visit at UtAR ended following a meeting with UtAR President Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuah Hean Telk.

The delegates then made their way to the Kuala Lumpur (KL) City Gallery to study the history and development of KL. They saw the spectacular KL City Model. Finally, the delegates visited Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park to have a brief discussion.

Defensive driving training

In view of promoting driving safety to UtARians, Volkswagen Passenger Cars Malaysia Sdn Bhd conducted a defensive driving training through its Volkswagen Polo P Project at UTAR Sungai Long Campus from 25 to 26 March 2017.

UtAR was the first university to join the project. The two-day training was divided into four sessions which saw a total of 140 staff and students participate. Each session consisted of a classroom theory session which entailed briefings on driving positions, driving habits, being distracted while driving, and braking avoidance.

The highlight of the training was the subsequent practical driving exercises which allowed the participants to experience emergency braking and a slalom course under the professionals’ supervision. Also provided were hands-on training aids for maintenance such as changing a flat tyre and checking the engine oil.

One of the instructors, Dr Chen said some statistics and said, “Global traffic injuries are increasing. Since 2007, 88 deaths occurred in 2017, 23 deaths have shown an increase. More alarmingly, it is predicted that global fatality figures will increase from 1.4 million deaths to 1.9 million deaths by 2020.”

He emphasised the importance of educating young drivers to be more responsible on the road. “Traffic injuries are one of the leading causes of death for people aged 15 to 29. Wearing a seat belt reduces the risk of fatality by up to 50 percent for front-seat passengers and on 75 percent for rear-seat passengers. So, make sure that you always wear your seat belt when you are in the car, whether you are the driver, the front-seat passenger or a rear-seat passenger.”

Certificates were given to the participants who joined the project.
As you prepare to immerse in your career, do take note of the impending changes in the world that will ultimately affect us all in Malaysia. It is evident that we are entering or perhaps have already stepped foot into the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This revolution is the digital revolution that will enable more technological breakthroughs in the years to come,” said UTAR President Ir Prof Academician Dato’ Dr Chuah Hean Teik at the recently held UTAR 24th Convocation at the Dewan Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik in UTAR Kampar Campus from 18 to 19 March 2017.

He added, “According to The World Economic Forum, education is the key driver in this revolution. It is the starting point for every student to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the modern workplace. And it imparts students with multiple transferable skills so that they can obtain sustainable, long-term careers.”

Prof Chuah advised the graduands, “Change is what you must ponder on in order for you to progress in your career. You constantly need to assess your performance and adapt to changes in management, technology, processes, systems, company culture and goals. You must evolve to become a career professional and from there perhaps to an entrepreneur or senior manager, and at every stage you will use different skills.”

A total of 2,628 graduands from 86 programmes comprising 65 Bachelor (Hons) degree, 16 Master’s degree and five PhD programmes received their convocation scrolls in four sessions held over the two-day period. The Convocation also celebrated the academic accomplishments of the graduates on their outstanding accomplishments.

Of the 2,628 graduands, nine received their PhDs, 66 received their Master’s degree and 41 received their Honours Degree with Distinction, while the rest received their Bacherors Honours with Merit and Bachelor Honours degree. The Convocation also saw UTAR former Council Chairman Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik being installed as UTAR’s first Chancellor, and UTAR’s Council-cum-Education Foundation Board of Trustees Member Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Dr Ling Chew Peh being appointed as UTAR’s new Council Chairman.

The Convocation was declared open by UTAR Chancellor Tun Ling. UTAR Council Chairman Tan Sri Dato’ Chuah, and other UTAR Council and Education Foundation Board of Trustees members were also present at the ceremony. The Guests of Honour for the four sessions of the Convocation were Minister of Transport and President of Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) Dato’ Sri Liow Tiong Lai represented by UTAR Council-cum-Minister of International Trade and Industry II Dato’ Seri Ong Ka Chuan for Session One, Chairman of Tungling Group Tan Sri Tan Koon Swan for Session Two, Director of Right Livelihood College (RLC) Dato’ (Dr) Anwar Fazal for Session Three, and Founder and Creative Director of Palam Mesra Sdn Bhd Rosemary Tan Mei Ling for Session Four. The scroll presenters for Session One to Session Four were UTAR Council Member Dato’ Seri Ong, UTAR Council Chairman Tan Sri Ting and UTAR Council Member Dato’ Dr Lim Khai Leang, UTAR Education Foundation Board of Trustees Member Tan Sri Dato’ Sri Lee Oi Hian, and UTAR Council Member Hiew Fen Yee respectively.

Tun Ling, in his introduction of UTAR, elaborated on how the public community contributed towards the setting up of UTAR and the journey taken to raise funds for UTAR. He also introduced the guest of honour for each convocation session and congratulated the graduates on their outstanding accomplishments.

He advised the graduates to embark on a new journey in the world of work. He added, “Change and changes are inevitable. Changes in our daily routines and in the physical, social, cultural and economic environments force us to make critical and logical decisions to accommodate these changes.” Before Tun Ling ended his speech, he quoted the Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw who said, “The reasonable man adapts himself to the world while the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself.”

In representing the Minister of Transport-cum-MCA President Dato’ Sri Liow Tiong Lai, Dato’ Seri Ong enthused, “Brace yourself for the future, a future where technology, skills and knowledge are constantly evolving. With the need for a more knowledge-based economy, the demand for education has risen to another level. Education is the cornerstone of our country’s economic development and social progress. Nowadays, the focus of education is on workers who can adapt to the speed at which new skills must be acquired to face challenges of the market.”

He added, “Malaysia’s future success depends on the quality of its human capital. Integrity and ethical values are aspects that everyone should uphold and cultivate. This is in line with the Government’s aspiration towards making Malaysia a developed nation which is advanced in social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual aspects.”
Tan Sri Tan inspired the graduands saying, “One of the key ingredients for realising your utmost potential in life is to acquire the habit of monitoring your attitude and its impact on your work performance, relationships and everyone around. It governs the way you perceive the world and the way the world perceives you. It is a power we all have within us as we encounter hard times, hurt feelings, heartache and physical and emotional pain. The key is to realise how you choose to respond to those circumstances.”

Dato’ Anwar Fazal said, “The planet is described as being in multiple crises – there are five and they all begin with ‘E’, namely ‘A crisis in Economy’, ‘A crisis in Ecology’, ‘A crisis in Equity’, ‘A crisis in Excellence’, and ‘A crisis in Empathy’. The Chinese word ‘E’ stands for engaging the world. I learnt that empowerment is to teach people to fish instead of giving them a fish. It is so much more distinguishing and respected and has greater capacity to impact people’s lives. ‘A’ is for aspira. Aim high, dream, have a vision to strive towards and don’t collapse. Success is what I strive for. ‘P’ stands for proactive. Take risks, try to be an initiator and have fun doing them.”

The Convocation also witnessed the conferment of the Honorary Doctorate Degree (Doctor of Science) to UTAR Council Member Dato’ Dr Lim Khai Leang for his exceptional contributions and leadership in the field of science.

K. Vidhiyavaani, a graduate of Bachelor of Education (Hons) Primary English Education, said, “It has been a life-changing experience pursuing the five year programme in Primary English Education. I came to love teaching and grew to adore children after signing up for this course. Children are interesting as they are innocent and they have made me realise that teaching is, in fact, a noble profession.” She is now teaching at a Chinese school in Selangor while awaiting her posting from the Ministry of Education.

Another high achiever was Dr Lai Choy Hoe, a graduate of Doctor of Philosophy (Chinese Studies) from the Institute of Chinese Studies. He said, “Despite being 76 years old, I believe in lifelong learning and my education in UTAR has helped me to be more open minded. I am able to understand the younger generations better. I have become more knowledgeable and the journey has really made me into an erudite person. I hope I can be an example to others that education is not limited by age and I would like to encourage the juniors and other youngsters to pursue lifelong learning and work hard as well as smart to achieve their goals.”

Graduating with an honours degree, Bachelor of Communication (Hons) Public Relations graduate Hoong Kian Kee said, “UTAR’s education has nurtured me with design thinking and problem solving skills. The programme has taught me critical thinking and analytical skills, which are important factors that have allowed me to propel further. The knowledge received is indeed helpful and practical.” Hoong was one of the 24 handpicked participants who represented UTAR and Malaysia for the Southeast Asian Global Undergraduate Leadership Programme (SEAGULL) in 2015. Talking about that experience, Hoong said, “The SEAGULL was a constructive platform for me to gain a unique out-of-classroom learning experience that has broadened my horizons, and provided me the confidence, independence, skills, and global competitiveness to be a future leader. Therefore, I would like to thank UTAR for who I am today and the skills that I will cherish for a lifetime.”

With the addition of 2,628 graduates from this 24th Convocation, the number of the university’s alumni now stands at 48,055 since its inaugural convocation in 2005.
In Search of Excellence

March was a celebratory month for UTAR Bachelor of Communication (Honours) Public Relations (PR) graduate Tham Lexuan when she was awarded the inaugural “Supernewsroom Young PR Professional Award 2016” on 17 March 2017 at intelectasia Consultancy.

The award was presented by Chief Executive Officer of intelectasia Consultancy and Founder of Supernewsroom Manninder Kaur Dhillon, who is also the Industry Advisor for UTAR’s Department of Public Relations. Also present at the award ceremony were intelectasia Chief Strategy Officer Puspavathy Ramaloo, Faculty of Arts and Social Science Dean Dr Alia Azaleea and PR Department Head Pong Kok Shiong.

Tham mentioned that it was her love for the PR programme that has made her excel in both her studies and work. “I have put in 100 percent effort in assignments and presentations. I feel truly honoured to receive this award,” Tham said.

Apart from expressing her gratitude to UTAR, she also advised her juniors saying, “Never regret your past decisions, but focus on the present. Always respect others and be trustworthy. Also, be humble and bold enough to step out of your comfort zone.”

She also added that the award is an acknowledgement and a testimony of her being an effective and passionate PR practitioner that will enable her to further contribute to the organisation she is affiliated with and the causes she believes in.

Dr Alia said “I like this award for the fact that it is meant for a specific field, hence students are being acknowledged for their expertise in the PR field.”

“We wanted to acknowledge a student that embodies the same principles of what Supernewsroom is all about. We look forward to seeing the young and upcoming PR professionals and to recognise their talents,” explained Manninder.

Double joy for FEGT researchers

Two research teams from UTAR Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology (FEGT) won a gold and silver medal respectively at the National Innovation and Invention Competition through Exhibition (ICOMPEx’17) held at the Politeknik Sultan Abdul Halim Mu’adzam Shah (POLIMAS), Jitra, Kedah from 21 to 23 March 2017.

The gold award-winning research project, titled “New Polyvinyl/Graphene Oxide Membrane for Oily Waste Water Filtration”, aims to filter oily waste water up to 97 percent rejection rate of oil at high water flux compared to other conventional membranes. The team comprised of advisor, the Head of the Department of Petrochemical Engineering Assoc Prof Dr M. Yamuna and two UTAR Petrochemical Engineering students S. Shimalaa and B. Sarvini.

Dr Yamuna said, “The students’ participation in the competition have given them an opportunity to gain exposure in the research field and experience to various new innovations.”

The other entry that bagged a silver medal was “Recovery of Gold from WEEE” by the lecturer from the Department of Petrochemical Engineering Dr Lai Koon Chun and his student, Saw Wen Shen. The research was done on one of the fastest growing waste streams, namely the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE).

Dr Lai explained, “WEEE contains rarer and noble metals such as gold compared to metals in metal mines. This project is to recover these valuables by employing the electrostatic separation technique.”

S. Sarvini said, “We would like to thank Dr Yamuna who guided us throughout the competition. The competition enabled us to discuss issues related to intellectual property.”

Another winner, Shimalaa shared, “The competition was a strategic platform to showcase our research and findings.”

Emerald Most Cited Article

Faculty of Business and Finance (FBF) Senior Lecturer Garry Tan Wei Han and PhD candidate Tan Boon In added feathers in their caps when their research paper titled “King’s Biscuits Berhad: Crafting the Next Move?” was recently awarded the “Most Cited Article” by Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (EEMCS) journal, Emerald (UK).

Also co-authored with Prof Ooi Keng Boon of UCSI University, the paper was based on a real-life case involving a leading biscuit manufacturer in Malaysia where it has grown over the years. It incorporated the concept of trend scanning in response to the economic challenges faced in the confectionery industry.

“The scenario, market structure and the competitors referred in the case are all real. The case was made even more compelling as it brought in the scenario of the Asian financial crisis when the ringgit was depreciated in 1997/1998,” said Boon In.

According to Wei Han, who also serves as a reviewer for EEMCS, the “Most Cited Article” is based on the number of citations published in the last three years sourced exclusively from Crossref, an official Digital Object Identifier (DOI) Registration Agency of the International DOI Foundation. “The case study is targeted at undergraduate and postgraduate management students undertaking courses such as marketing, branding and strategy. Instructors can download the case with teaching notes and lead students to discuss how to strategise for future planning,” explained Wei Han.

Double joy for FEGT researchers

Six UTAR students nabbed one gold, two silver and three bronze medals in five categories at the Nottingham Ultimate Taekwondo Showdown (NUTS) 2017 held in the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus from 24 to 25 February 2017.

International Business student Choon Siang Yong took home gold for the Female Bantamweight, Junior Category; while Accounting student Tay Zixin took home silver for the Male Featherweight, Senior Category respectively.

International Business student Choong Poh Yee, a Surveying student Tan Pei Lin, and Physiotherapy student Liu Vivian took home bronze for the Female Bantamweight, Senior Category; Female Flyweight, Senior Category and Female Flyweight, Junior Category respectively.

“It was a good platform for our athletes as this competition has helped them gain quite a bit of experience and exposure to a high standard tournament,” said Department of Student Affairs (Sungai Long Campus) Sports and Recreation Unit officer K. Ganavenoth.

Six wins in taekwondo

Over 15 private universities and colleges took part in this competition. The Nottingham Ultimate Taekwondo Showdown (NUTS) 2017 was organised by the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus.
The importance of Media Literacy

With the aim to educate the students and staff about media literacy in Malaysia, The Social Trends and Culture Cluster under the Tun Tan Cheng Lock Centre of Social and Policy Studies organised a scholarly lecture titled “The Era of Post-Truth: The Importance of Media Literacy in Malaysia” at Kampar Campus on 31 March 2017.

Delivered by Prof Dr Mohammed Zin bin Nordin from the Department of Malay Language and Literature and the Faculty of Languages and Communication of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSRI), the two-hour talk served as a strategic platform for individuals to understand the concept of media literacy and its significance in our daily lives.

Prof Zin defined, “Media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms. However, the definitions evolve over time and a more robust definition is now needed to situate media literacy in the context of its importance. The use of media technologies does not necessarily mean that users are media literate and competent. In this digital era, media literacy is crucial for achieving critical and creative thinking, also active citizenship. The stakeholders need to come together to address the needs of children, provide support and grant platforms for them to use new media productively.”

A Faculty of Arts and Social Science’s Department of Public Relations Lecturer-cum-Organising Chairperson Rafidah binti Abdul Razak said, “This lecture is a good platform for academics and students to learn and expand their knowledge about media literacy and its importance. The talk also paved ways for the academics and students to learn about the issues that are related to media literacy and the risks that might incur from the use of Internet with zero media literacy. I am glad to be part of the talk.”

The Faculty of Accountancy and Management (FAM) organised a seminar called “Malaysian Economy (Property Markets and Start-Ups)” for visiting MBA students from Nanjing Agricultural University (NAU) and UTAR on 25 February 2017 at Sungai Long Campus.

The invited speakers were Raine and Home International Zaki + Partners Sdn Bhd Associate Director James Tan Keen Meng, EU-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EUMCCI) CEO Roberto Benetello. Also present at the seminar were NAU MBA Education Center Deputy Dean Prof Dr Geng Xinhui, UTAR FAM Dean Dr Sia Bee Chuan, FAM Deputy Dean Assoc Prof Dr Kevin Low Lock Teng, and FAM lecturers Dr Pok Wei Fong, Dr Cham Tat Huei, and Assoc Prof Dr Law Kian Aun.

During her welcome remarks, Dr Sia said, “The world is evolving, ICT and social media are key factors nowadays. We need to understand how the world is and what the market demands are.”

Prof Geng said, “We truly appreciate UTAR for organising this seminar. The speakers with NAU and UTAR lecturers and students

NAU is committed to promote leading-edge academics, cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial talents. Today’s seminar is a great platform for both universities to exchange teaching experience, expand social networks and explore collaborative opportunities.”

Dr Pok said, “As of September 2016, the labour force of Malaysia numbers 14.76million, and the unemployment rate is low. Today’s seminar will give fruitful lessons for the MBA students.”

James Tan said, “I wish to share on how to apply the knowledge and theory in reality. We need more practical knowledge in our education system. We need to train the students according to the practical applications needed in the market.”

Roberto said, “In order to promote, support and develop EU business interests in Malaysia as well as facilitate trade, commerce and investments, EUMCCI carries out activities that will catalyse networking of European companies in Malaysia.”

E-commerce Awareness Talk by 11street

The Department of Soft Skills Competency (DSSC) of Sungai Long Campus organised the E-commerce Awareness Talk by 11street Malaysia’s Manager of Seller Development Vi Vian Chuang.

“Mobile internet is the future of everything. The digital revolution has brought about changes to our everyday life as well as the commercial platforms. Statistics show that approximately 68 percent of Malaysians are online—a higher penetration rate than the Asian average. Meanwhile, smartphones are now needed to situate media literacy in the context of its importance. The use of media technologies does not necessarily mean that users are media literate and competent. In this digital era, media literacy is crucial for achieving critical and creative thinking, also active citizenship. The stakeholders need to come together to address the needs of children, provide support and grant platforms for them to use new media productively.”

In closing his talk, he expressed his confidence in the role that Malaysia can play because the four major currents of world civilisations — Chinese, Indian, Islamic and Western — co-exist in everyday life. If and when Asian cultural and intellectual reinvigoration does happen, it will lift Asian civilisation to new heights.

Chuang (front row, fourth from right) with the participants after the talk

The speakers with NAU and UTAR lecturers and students

At the talk, Chuang also shared with the audience some of the stories of successful 11street sellers. The talk consisted of several sessions encompassing a brief on the e-commerce concept, photography tips and tricks, quizzes and games.

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黎紫书畅谈马华文学

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专业作家黄紫书做客第一届拉曼大学文学周“尹始”开幕典礼，关于马华文学的分享，吸引了来自校内外的书迷与文学爱好者一同前来共襄盛举。她表示，文学能够带来精神与心灵层面的启发，接受美学的洗礼，更有助于塑造健全的德育人格。她也补充，文学能够让人在艺术与现实之间找到一种平衡，让人发现世界的美，让人心灵得到滋养。黎紫书也提到，文学作品要引起共鸣，需要有深度、有共鸣的情感，以及敏锐的观察力。她指出，文学作品不仅要表现社会现实，也要展现人性的深度。她鼓励文学爱好者要敢于尝试，勇于创新，才能创作出更多优秀的作品。现场气氛热烈，观众们热情地参与互动，纷纷表示受益匪浅。

Diadakan sebanyak dua kali dalam setahun, kempen tersebut bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesedaran dan menyebarkan pengetahuan mengenai kesihatan mental dalam kalangan pelajar serta kakitangan UTAR. Ia juga bermatlamat untuk mempertingkatkan kesihatan mental melalui pendedahan pengetahuan dan pemahaman secara meluas mengenai pelbagai aspek seperti, punca-punca, kesan-kesan, langkah-langkah pencegahan dan pengurusan isu-isu kesihatan mental.


Turut hadir dalam kempen tersebut ialah Ketua Jabatan Psikologi dan Kaunseling dari FAS V. Glory Nancy, Pengerusi Penganjur Lim Chean Wei, pensyarah-pensyarah dari Jabatan Psikologi dan Kaunseling, ahli-ahli jawatankuasa, kakitangan dan pelajar-pelajar UTAR.

“Kami percaya pendedahan sebegini boleh membina keupayaan dalam kalangan pelajar untuk mengurus kesihatan mental masing-masing. Sebagai contoh, faktor-faktor perlindungan seperti kesedaran mengenai simptom-simptom tekanan, pengetahuan mengenai cara-cara mengendalikan tekanan serta membina keyakinan diri dalam mengatasi tekanan serta membantu mengurangkan gejala gangguan mental dalam kalangan pelajar-pelajar universiti. Selain itu, kempen ini juga memberi ruang kepada pelajar-pelajar Psikologi UTAR untuk mengaplikasikan pengetahuan yang mereka pelajari di dalam kelas. Aktiviti ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman yang mendalam serta membolehkan mereka menunjukkan keupayaan mereka dalam mengaplikasikan pengetahuan teori kepada kemahiran praktikal,” kata Pheh.

Bermatlamat untuk mewujudkan kesedaran dari segi pelbagai aspek kesihatan mental, kempen tersebut dibahagikan kepada tiga bahagian utama, iaitu Pemahaman mengenai Gangguan Psikologi, Ujian Saringan Psikologi, Strategi Bantu Diri; Isu-isu Kesihatan Mental; dan Proses Penuaan yang Sihat. Ketiga-tiga bahagian ini mempunyai fungsifungsi yang tersendiri, antaranya ialah untuk meningkatkan kesedaran mengenai isu-isu kesihatan mental yang lazim termasuk gangguan psikologi, ujian saringan psikologi dan teknik-teknik bantu-diri, penerangan mengenai neuropsychiatry dan risiko penduduk, mempertingkatkan kesihatan fizikal dan mental dalam kalangan golongan tua melalui program intensensi seperti program rangsang kognitif dan buku sejarah hidup.

Lim berkata, “Pada masa kini, mata pelajaran Psikologi bukan sahaja memeringatkan pemahaman teori, malah ia juga memberi tumpuan terhadap aplikasi psikologi. Oleh itu, program ini merupakan salah satu platform yang bagus buat semua pelajar Psikologi. Tahun Ketiga untuk mengaplikasikan pengetahuan yang mereka pelajari di dalam kelas. Melalui pembentangan-pembentangan yang diadakan sepanjang kempen ini, para pelajar juga dapat memahami sesetengah topik secara lebih mendalam. Ia juga memberi keyakinan kepada para pelajar dan mampu membina keupayaan mereka untuk menjelaskan sesetengah isu kepada peserta-peserta kempen.”

Beliau menambah, “Saya ingin merakamkan penghargaan saya kepada penasihat dan semua pensyarah dari Jabatan Psikologi dan Kaunseling kerana memberi dorongan dan sokongan sepanjang proses penyediaan dan pelaksanaan kempen ini. Di samping itu, saya juga ingin berterima kasih kepada semua ahli-ahli jawatankuasa yang bergabung bahu untuk bersama-sama menjayakan kempen yang penuh dengan manfaat ini.”

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