

a tradition of giving, a culture of bonding

SERDANG

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Environment, Conservation and
Sustainability

Nirwana Forest Reserve, University Putra Malaysia Sarawak



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Voice of the Chief Editor

In a world increasingly shaped by overconsumption and environmental neglect, natural disasters are becoming more frequent reminders and warnings that the Earth, too, has its limits. While the main focus is to recover and preserve, there are still many environmental issues that can be concerning but rarely discussed or exposed to the public. Hence we took this opportunity to gather respective guests to further open the discourse regarding the issues in SERDANG SUN, issued 26.

As a chief editor for this year's SERDANG SUN issue 26, I would like to express my pride and gratitude for this 26th edition, as it resonates with my expertise in the Faculty of Agriculture. With strong support and encouragement to focus on environmental themes on the environment, sustainability and conservation, the writers did a brilliant job. Our editorial team has also grown stronger through collaborative discussions and collective proofreading. From this issue, we have welcomed new faces and new ideas into what can be strived to create values among the readers, just so the public can comprehend and be aware of the ongoing issues caused by humans ourselves.

UPM itself has strong roots in addressing environmental concerns through research, teachings and learning mainly, supported by the Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of

Forestry and Environment. Many of its alumni continue to contribute to environmental organisations and departments, including forestry and conservation agencies across the country. Furthermore, few of UPM alumni hold strong positions in "environmental" related organisations such as the Department of Forestry Science and Biodiversity and PERHILITAN, JPSM (Jabatan Perhutanan Semenanjung Malaysia).

When addressing issues of environment, sustainability, and conservation, we must take a balanced approach which considers urban development, human well-being, and the preservation of flora and fauna. This is not to benefit one way or another, but both the environment and us, the human beings.



“Environment, Sustainability and Conservation”

WORLD SOIL DAY CONSERVING VALUABLE NATURAL RESOURCES



Dr. Shamshuddin Jusop

Introduction

Soil is life thus it is essential for our existence on earth. Soil is formed from rocks with varying chemical compositions. Once formed, it helps support life (plants, animals and humans). Recognizing the crucial role played by soil, World Soil Day (WSD) was proposed by the parties with vested interest to safeguard and conserve soil.

Soil and land are not similar but interconnected in many ways. When we are alive and kicking, we walk on land. When we die, we go into soil. During my 50 years as an academic (beginning in 1972), I spent time studying soil in Southeast Asia. Soil provides a place for plants to grow, filter water and helps regulate CO₂ in the atmosphere. Carbon that impacts environment, agriculture and weather pattern is largely retained and/or stored in the soil. It is essential to sustain life.

To quote some verses from the Quran; Chapter 20, verse 55 “*From this very earth, We created you and to the same earth, We shall cause you to return and from it We shall bring you forth to life again.*” Chapter 7, verse 56 “*Do not pollute the earth after it has been so wholesomely set in order.*”

A celebrated US environmental activist, Ibrahim Abdul-Matin wrote that his father, a Muslim living in Bronx, New York, frequently walked and stopped to pray in parks, forests, open spaces near rivers or lakes; to him everywhere on earth was a mosque.

In his book, *The Green Deen*, Abdul-Matin wrote that “*Our mission is to help restore the divine balance of our planet by raising awareness of the need for environmental stewardship and promoting positive action among Muslims and the wider community.*”

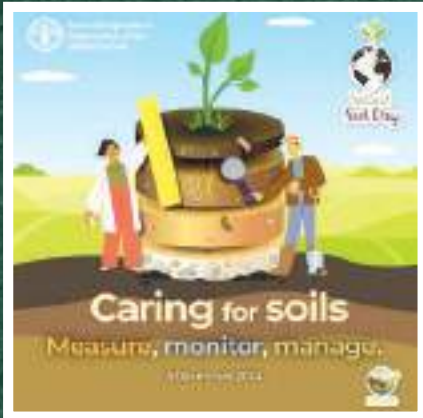
Conserving land/soil to sustain its productivity is no easy task. A recent Greenpeace Malaysia reporting on this critical issue explains it all. It is a growing concern in Southeast Asia that climate is changing unpredictably for the worse. This is due in part to human intervention with nature – uncontrolled forest clearing in the highlands, excessive burning of fossil fuel or draining peatlands, just to mention a few. Deforestation reduces nature’s ability to regulate surface and groundwater flows that impacts our economy catastrophically; floods that destroy homes and livelihood, droughts and dry spells leave farmers struggling and increased health risks.

World Soil Day Celebration

Every year, WSD is celebrated on 5 December, focusing on the importance of healthy soil and advocating sustainable management of soil resources for the good of humanity. The WSD celebration was mooted at the International Society of Soil Science (ISSS) in 1994 at the World Congress of Soil Science (WCSS) in Acapulco, Mexico. WSD was promoted and celebrated by International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) since 2002. The Guest of Honour was Norman Borlaug, the Father of Green Revolution - the Nobel Prize Winner for Peace. I was the President of the Malaysian Society of Soil Science (MSSS). The main agenda of the meeting was a proposal to change the name from ‘ISSS’ to ‘IUSS’.

The theme for the WSD 2024 was “Caring for Soils - Measure, Monitor and Manage”, which represents the need for accurate soil data collection to guide sustainable management practices.

FAO supported the establishment of WSD as a global awareness platform within the Global Soil Partnership Framework. In June 2013, the FAO Conference unanimously endorsed World Soil Day and requested its official adoption at the 68th UN General Assembly. The UN General Assembly designated 5 December 2014 as the first official World Soil Day.



World Soil Day Celebration in Malaysia

The MSSS adopted the proposal by FAO to celebrate World Soil Day. The celebration is normally led by the scientific society with strong support from the stakeholders – i.e., Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Department of Agriculture (DOA) and Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI).

For the first time in the history of the WSD celebration in Malaysia, the Department of Land Management, Faculty of Agriculture, UPM, organized a public lecture to mark the occasion. The event was held at Dewan Pertanian on December 13, 2024. I was invited to express my thoughts and views on soils of Peninsular Malaysia. The title of the lecture was “*Ringkasan Sejarah Besar Semenanjung Malaysia: Geologi, Tanah dan Pertanian*”. (“A Brief Big History of Peninsular Malaysia: Geology, Soil and Agriculture.”)

Climate Change since Time Immemorial

Late Pleistocene (50,000-11,000 BP) was the geological epoch that registered intermittent climatic fluctuation across the globe. Changes in climate during that period had a remarkable impact on landscape, soil and agriculture in Peninsular Malaysia. Sea level at one point during the period was 100 m below the present height, while at other times it was 50 m above it. At the lowest sea level, a large area of Southeast Asia which hitherto flooded by sea water was exposed to the atmospheric conditions. The new enlarged land is called “Sundaland”.

The phenomenal drop in the sea level after reaching its highest resulted in the development of fluvial (riverine) terraces. Pedologists divided the terraces into: 1) High terraces; 2) Intermediate terraces; and 3) Low terraces, known as T_3 , T_2 and T_1 terraces, respectively.

The sea level about 4,300 BP was 3-5 m above the present height. A large area of Peninsular Malaysia was then inundated by sea water. The peninsula was seemingly smaller than what it is today. It was the time when pyrite (FeS_2) was mineralized under anaerobic environment. The presence of pyrite is a prerequisite to the formation of acid sulfate soils, which are infertile.

The presence of beach ridges along the coast is indicative of a recession of the sea since Mid-Holocene. Their formation at various elevations is related to the progressive lowering of sea level of many meters. The younger ridges were subsequently created as the sea level fell, with their elevation getting lower. The landscape formed in this manner is called “Beach Ridges Interspersed with Swales”, using BRIS as the acronym. Soils formed from the ridges (called BRIS Soils) are not suitable for agriculture due to their very sandy nature.

Weather Patterns in Southeast Asia

Human greed often disregards the laws of nature. We have to look after soil with care to maintain its fertility. Otherwise, the wrath of nature will come to haunt us, sooner rather than later. Disaster comes in many forms. Extreme weather conditions that come around at odd hours, threatening people’s lives and agricultural land.

Global warming deteriorates weather patterns. Of late, we have been experiencing stronger typhoons, more violent storms and heavier rainfall than ever before. Serious flooding is a common scenario during the monsoon months. Frequent super typhoon that took place in the Philippines and the great flood of Malaysia in 2014 are the cases in point. Perhaps, these are nature’s way of telling humans on earth that enough is enough.

Uncontrolled land clearing results in unprecedented land/soil degradation. Felling of forest reduces the ability of the Earth’s ecosystem to regulate the concentration of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere. It is made worse by the extensive use of fossil fuel to sustain the industrial growth of many countries in the world. Carbon dioxide in the air has increased from 250 (pre-industrial revolution) to the present level of more than 430 ppm.



The participants with Assoc. Professor Christopher Teh Boon Sung, the Head of the Department of Land Management, Faculty of Agriculture (seated, left) and Professor Loh Teck Chwen, the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, UPM (seated, right)

Temperature across the globe has increased by 1.5-2.0°C compared to that of the 100 years ago. Guess what happens to the weather in Southeast Asia comes the year 2100? If what we have reported in the news is anything to go by, the region is getting warmer. Peninsular Malaysia will be facing high risk of weather-related calamities – droughts and floods.

Plastic wares are strewn everywhere. Unscrupulous people keep throwing them on land, road shoulders, into rivers and other waterways like nobody business. Drains in the urban areas are often clogged up beyond imagination, hastening flash flood occurrences.

No body realizes the consequence of what they have been doing to the environment. Many do not believe that the calamity they are facing with is due in part to their own doing. It is time to pull up our sock and do something good to help resolve the problems before it get worse. The government and relevant NGOs have to play their part to make citizen aware of their duties to the country in terms of conserving land, soil and water resources.

Sea Level Rise in the Future

In 2017, I published a paper on sea level rise/drop in the country due to climate change. Earth temperature is slowly, but surely rising above the normal level since the Industrial Revolution. This melted ice in the polar region, causing sea level to rise. Sea level in Southeast Asia has already risen by >20 cm since then. Coastal erosion is getting worse by the years. The negative impact of sea water intrusion into rice fields located in the low-lying coastal regions of Southeast Asia is becoming a reality.

A conference was held in 2017 in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the Geological Society of Malaysia. Leading Malaysian experts on climate change presented their thoughts and views on how to deal with the expected calamity. It seems that future rise in sea level is real. This notion is consistent with the statement made by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia in its Annual Report 2020. Utusan Malaysia reported on January 16, 2025 that urban areas along the

coasts would slowly disappear by the year 2100.

My continued thought on the issue was published by The Edge Malaysia in 2022. It is believed that by 2100, we may lose about 18% of our precious land fringing the low-lying Malaysian coastal regions due to rise in sea level. What happen to us and the rice fields located along the coast? Where, by then, do we go for safety and to grow rice to feed us all?

Agricultural Activities in the Highlands

High rainfall in the highlands increases soil erosion and/or landslides. The region, stretching from Perak to Negeri Sembilan, is the backbone of the Peninsular Malaysia. It is called Western Belt Main Range - the Main Range. It coincides with the presence of granite that forms the compelling topographic highs in the peninsula. The Main Range is 480 km long, with average width of 64-80 km, rising to more than 2,000 m above sea level at some locations.

Environmental degradation in the highlands is a big issue. We often hear of the public outcry about soil erosion that silt up rivers in Cameron Highlands (Pahang). Devastating landslides incidents often occur in the disaster-prone Lojing Highlands (Kelantan). We point fingers at some of the unscrupulous farmers growing vegetables on sloping land earmarked for forest reserve. Where are the enforcement officers responsible to protect our interest? They should be going around enforcing laws to prevent the calamity from occurring. Forest is a public domain that stabilizes land ecosystem. Trees help produce extra O₂ essential for life.

By law, Peninsular Malaysia does not allow agriculture on land with slope >25°. However, in 2019, the rule has been revoked by the Department of Agriculture (DOA). From then on, durian was allowed to be planted on land with higher slope. I was told during a meeting that durian (a forest species) can be grown on land with <30° slope.

If farmers are growing durian on sloping land >25°, strict rules and regulations have to be put in place or adhered to at all cost. Durian

cultivation in fragile land of the Main Range (highlands) is subjected to the terms and conditions outlined in MyGAP, which is under the purview of the DOA. If MyGAP regulations are strictly followed or adhered to, the harvested durian can get certification, allowing it to be exported to the overseas market.

Economic activities in Cameron Highlands are excessive and has gone out of control. A disaster took place on October 23, 2013 that struck Cameron Highlands without warning. A heavy downpour resulted in destruction of properties, including the loss of biodiversity. Due to the extraordinary heavy rainfall on that fateful day, water level in the stream at the TNB (the Malaysian power giant) Hydropower Station rose dangerously high, threatening the collapse of the wall of the dam, water in the dam had to be released, causing it to flood homes and some vegetable farms.

Cameron Highlands resorts used to be cool and fresh. Studies have shown that the air temperature has gone up by about 2°C. This is due to the uncontrolled agricultural activities and/or over-exploitation of its natural resources where areas reserved for forest are slowly being encroached. The relevant authority must identify the confluence of streams and rivers and build silt traps. This measure can slow the siltation process. The Malaysian hydropower giant had set aside USD 1 million to de-silt the Cameron Highlands dam every year. We need to increase vegetable production to cater to the increasing demand.

Forest plays an important part in a sustainable ecosystem. Trees with their extensive canopy and good root system seemingly able to reduce the impact of the erosive tropical rainfall. In the absence of trees, rainwater falls directly on the ground, breaking soil structures that accelerate soil erosion. The topsoil that supports plant growth will be gone, leaving behind nutrient-deficient subsoil.

To grow permanent crops on a sloping land, contour terraces are constructed and cover crops are immediately grown to protect the soil/land. This is a standard practice to prevent soil erosion and/or landslides. Cover crops, such as legumes, fix N₂ from the air

and become part of the soils when they die which improves soil fertility.

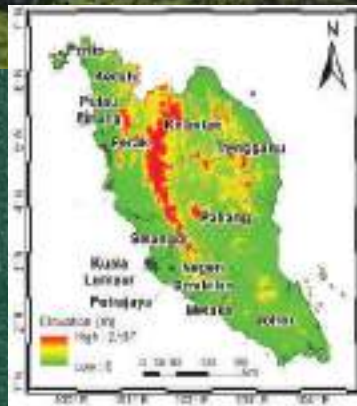
Good soil management practices in the highlands are important as stipulated in the National Agro-food Policy (2021-2030). Food has to be produced sustainably – i.e. high quality and acceptable to consumers. Sustainable production means economically viable, environment-friendly and socially acceptable. The Malaysian Society of Soil Science (MSSS) can advise farmers in the highlands how to manage soil on sloping land to sustain maximal productivity and high profitability.

Coastal Erosion Affected by the Rise in Sea Level

Coastal regions in Peninsular Malaysia are the worst affected locations by climate change. Strong winds during monsoon produce waves up to 2 -3 m high, pounding beaches along the coastline. The state of Kelantan is the hardest hit and to a lesser extent, the coastal areas of the West Coast. Steps taken to curtail coastal erosion have met with mixed success. Longshore current off the coast of Kelantan has a direct impact on its beaches.

This leads to shifting of fine sediments (silt and clay) in a northerly fashion so much so that the mouth of Kelantan River had moved 35 km northwards. A comprehensive engineering study with proper mitigation procedures to resolve the problem need to be undertaken. If the erosion goes unchecked, the coastal regions of Peninsular Malaysia, not least Kelantan, will be destroyed beyond recognition.

What can we do to save natural resources in the coastal areas fronting the coastlines of the country? What can we do to stop or prevent the unprecedented coastal erosion from continuing? The time has come for us to put our act together to make things happen, sooner rather than later. We have to act fast using the latest technological know-how to get a solution to the long-standing problem before it is too late.



Landslides occurring at a vegetable farm on a sloping land in Lojing, Kelantan, Malaysia

A topographic map of Peninsular Malaysia (https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-topography-and-administrative-districts-in-Peninsular-Malaysia_fig1_326005054)

Flood Affects lives and Properties

In 2014, a devastating flood occurred in Peninsular Malaysia. A national committee was set up to study the immediate cause of the unprecedented calamity. The committee was expected to suggest to the government on how to reduce its effects should a flood of that magnitude occurs again. The committee completed the study and submitted the findings to the government for further action. The comprehensive report was made public. Malaysia suffered an economic loss of USD 0.7 billion, with 300,000 people affected by the tragedy. The worst hit was Kuala Krai, Kelantan.

The calamity was made worse by the uncontrolled land development and the extensive soil erosion in the upland region, subsequently resulting in the siltation of sediments on riverbed with muddy and sandy materials. During the height of the flood, trees in the upland regions were uprooted and abandoned logs were transported downstream, causing untold damages to properties and agricultural lands. The sediments were subsequently silted in the lower reaches of the Kelantan River.

What was the immediate cause of the flood and why soil erosion was so severe? Experts agreed with the notion that it was promoted by heavy rain falling in an area within a short span of time. Hence, soils (topsoil and subsoil) were eroded and subsequently washed away or deposited, causing serious damages in the low-lying regions downstream (Kuala Krai).

If the hilly and undulating lands of Kuala Krai or Gua Musang in Kelantan were fully covered by natural forest during the time of the flood, the damage suffered by human settlements and/or their properties could have been much less. Land in the upland regions of the state should have at least 70% plant cover to keep the soil protected. Under the situation, soil erosion is minimal. Only geological erosion occurs. The erosivity of rainfall in areas covered by undisturbed natural land with > 70% plant cover is relatively lower.

The occurrence of heavy rainfall in Kelantan at that time was related to a natural phenomenon called Madden-Julian Oscillation. Due to high pressure in the Pacific Ocean, strong easterly wind from the Indian Ocean carrying high amount of moisture blew into Peninsular Malaysia. When it met the strong westerly wind from



Coastal erosion affecting the beaches of the East Coast (left) and West Coast (right) of Peninsular Malaysia

the Pacific Ocean coming from the opposite direction, extraordinary high rainfall occurred, resulting in the flood.

The amount of rainfall recorded at Gunung Gagau, Gua Musang, Kelantan from 15-24 December 2014 was 1986 mm. This is extremely high, about two-third of the annual rainfall in the area. The Faculty of Agriculture, UPM, set up a response team to check the aftermath of the flood to determine the damage done to soils and crops at the lower reaches of the Kelantan River. A special visit to Kelantan was made in January 2015 to survey the affected areas in the vicinity of Kota Bharu and Tumpat (near the coastal region) as well as to meet selected farmers in order to understand their immediate need to get back to normalcy. Samples were collected (both soils and crops) for preliminary analyses.

One of the worst affected sites was Pasir Pekan Hilir. The levee of the Kelantan River was once a fertile land, cropped to water melon, groundnut and scores of other cash crops. Farmers believed that the damages could have been much less if the lands on the other side of the river were not extensively disturbed by urban development. Kota Bharu, the state capital of Kelantan, is fast developing town. Land along the river bank in Kota Bharu is earmarked for the construction of houses and shopping malls. Constructed high wall in Kota Bharu prevented the floodwater from flowing via its natural or normal pathway resulting in the overflow of the river water into Pasir Pekan Hilir, causing damages to land and properties.

Heavy siltation of sandy clay deposits destroyed a corn farm before it was harvested. The silty mud was as thick as 20-30 cm, indicating the presence of materials believed to have come from subsoil of the upper reaches of the Kelantan River. Due to the heavy siltation of sediments, natural grasses were completely destroyed, leaving behind nothing for livestock to eat. A poor cow that survived the flood had no way of getting enough grass to eat.

Mica and feldspars were found in the samples. The primary minerals can only be present in the subsoil. It is believed that the materials in the floodwater were the infertile eroded subsoil coming from the upper reaches of the Kelantan River. Other minerals in the sediments were quartz, kaolinite and gibbsite, which can be present

in both topsoil and subsoil. These minerals are considered very stable, but with low fertility. Mica and feldspars take a long time to weather and consequently release plant nutrients into the soils, rendering the sediments deposited on agricultural land at Pasir Pekan Hilir unfit for agriculture.

Conclusion

The ultimate aim of celebrating World Soil Day is to encourage conserving valuable natural resource i.e., soil/land, to keep its beauty and fertility for the good of humanity. We have to leave behind good soil to our children, grandchildren and those down the line. Having fertile soil for agriculture, food security of the country is assured thus life on earth will be sustained.

“ We have to leave behind good soil to our children, grandchildren and those down the line. Having fertile soil for agriculture, food security of the country is assured thus life on earth will sustained.



Photographs showing: a) Complete destruction of agriculture plots on land at Pasir Pekan Hilir, Kelantan (left); and b) A cow suffering from malnutrition due lack of grasses for food (right)

On Ecosystem, Sustainability, and Willingness

The Perspective of Zainal Abidin Othman

Writer: Dr. Nurul Atiqah Amran

(Alumni Class of 2022)
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication

His Beginning through Process-Driven Growth

En. Zainal Abidin Othman, CEO of Perbadanan Taman Negeri Pahang (PTNP), began his academic journey at UPM in 2018. What started as a postgraduate pursuit soon unfolded into a meaningful exploration of the country's landscapes. When the COVID-19 pandemic brought most activities to a standstill, the nature of his research took him in the opposite direction. "Everyone stays indoors," he recalled, "but my work requires me to be out there, observing ecosystems and engaging with communities. Those travels, often through remote and challenging terrains, became the foundation of my growing expertise in sustainable recreation and ecotourism."



During his time at the Faculty of Forestry and Environment, UPM, he was actively involved in consultation work while managing a research grant under the FRGS scheme. These experiences, he notes, formed the backbone of his professional readiness for his current role at PTNP. "Everything I do now has roots in what I explored at UPM," he reflected, describing how the blend of fieldwork, research, and industry engagement shaped his understanding of environmental stewardship.

more than 200 participants. He described, "Determination is a series of internal processes, willingness, sustained effort, and the humility to confront personal limitations."

Beyond experience, his intention ran deeper. "The main reason I continued my studies was to give back to the community," he explained. Sustainability, in his view, cannot be sustained through episodic programmes alone. Short-term initiatives may generate visibility, but without embedded community

Leadership at Perbadanan Taman Negeri Pahang (PTNP)

As our conversation turned to leadership, we discussed his current role at PTNP. This organisation operates with a holistic mission: to manage and sustain the environment while uplifting the socioeconomic well-being of local communities. For him, the foundation of sustainability rests on two essential elements: the community's willingness and effort. The organisation's mandate



"The word 'sustainable' is frequently used, but truly living up to it is far more challenging."



Strengthening Purpose through Education

When asked what gave him the courage to return to academia despite already having a stable career, a thriving company (Coral Farm Consortium Sdn. Bhd.), and a solid reputation, he smiled and offered a modest reply. "People usually call it determination, but that is not the only thing."

He explained that his professional history did, in fact, align with the environment. Through initiatives ranging from coral exports to marine education to search-and-rescue instruction, he has engaged deeply with environmental work, benefiting

ownership, their impact dissipates. This understanding aligns with broader development principles that prioritise participatory governance, local capacity-building, and social continuity as prerequisites for environmental resilience.

Education, therefore, becomes both a tool and a responsibility. He continued, "It is my duty to cultivate informed stewardship and to ensure that conservation initiatives outlive institutional cycles." His return to formal study was motivated by the need to contribute with credibility, knowledge, and accountability. These are the qualities essential for translating policy intentions into durable outcomes on the ground.

extends beyond conservation to include socioeconomic upliftment, recognising that environmental protection and community well-being are interdependent.

The conversation naturally moved toward a deeper reflection on sustainability. At this juncture, it became particularly meaningful to understand En. Zainal Abidin's perspective on the subject, especially as UPM continues to initiate numerous programmes that place sustainability at their core. He elaborated, "The word 'sustainable' is frequently used, but truly living up to it is far more challenging. Achieving sustainability requires time, coordination, and above all, meaningful engagement with the communities that live closest to the environment. This philosophy continues to guide PTNP's approach to community development. My reason for returning to graduate school is precisely that: to educate the community and help them understand the importance of protecting our environment."

PTNP provides early support to communities while guiding them toward independent operation, stronger institutional capacity, and responsible engagement with external partners. This approach aligns with the Man and the Biosphere (MAB)

On Ecosystem, Sustainability, and Willingness

framework, integrating conservation with sustainable development through community participation and knowledge-based management across the core, buffer, and transition zones.

Perbadanan Taman Negeri Pahang (PTNP)

Perbadanan Taman Negeri Pahang was established to address the need for an integrated authority capable of coordinating conservation, tourism, and community development across

collaboration, and a long-term vision for a flourishing, sustainable Pahang.

The Project He Holds Most Proud: Lipis Geopark

When asked about the achievement or project he is most proud of, En. Zainal Abidin named Lipis Geopark without hesitation. As he described the intricate planning and implementation that led to its recognition, he immediately shifted the spotlight away from himself. "It is a success made possible because an entire district

"To elevate an area to UNESCO Geopark status, every site must receive equal support and standardised assistance," En. Zainal Abidin explained. For him, collaboration became a central strategy throughout the process. "We invited experts from established geoparks to visit and guide us, and at the same time, we travelled to their sites to learn from their experiences. That was the ecosystem we built, and it is what made this project so meaningful."



the state. As a monitoring and regulatory body, PTNP safeguards state parks, forest reserves, and inland water bodies, and prevents encroachment and misuse.

Equally important is its role in supporting environmentally responsible tourism and investment, positioning Pahang within a broader sustainability-oriented development trajectory. The organisation's work reflects a governance logic that balances protection with productive use, aligning conservation outcomes with social and economic viability.

With expansive state parks, pristine lakes, intricate cave systems, and extensive protected forests, Pahang holds remarkable potential. PTNP's role is to steward these assets responsibly, ensuring they are preserved and managed in a structured, sustainable manner that enhances tourism while uplifting the communities that depend on these environments.

Under En Zainal Abidin's leadership, PTNP has become more than an agency. It becomes a dynamic ecosystem grounded in accountability,

collaborated. Each stakeholder took ownership of the same goal without needing every instruction spelled out."

Lipis Geopark received its recognition as a National Geopark on 9 November 2023 and was officially proclaimed by the 16th Yang di-Pertuan Agong in January 2024. PTNP serves as the entrusted secretariat appointed by the Pahang State Government to coordinate and steward this significant achievement.

Located in the northern part of Pahang, the Lipis Geopark, formally known as the Special Region of Rich Natural and Cultural Heritage, borders the district of Jerantut to the east, Raub to the south, Cameron Highlands and the state of Perak to the west, and Kelantan to the north. Lipis is the third-largest district among the eleven districts in Pahang, covering an extensive area of 5,408 square kilometres.

Lipis Geopark is now Malaysia's 11th National Geopark, and PTNP is currently working to secure its recognition as the country's 5th UNESCO Global Geopark.

Rethinking Human Responsibility

En. Zainal Abidin situated environmental responsibility within the realities of contemporary life. Development, resource use, and ecological impact are inseparable; the ethical question lies not in denial but in mitigation, restoration, and balance.

"To live," he explained, "we must consume nature. But to remain human, we must care for it. This is where balance becomes our moral compass. We cannot deny our dependence on natural resources unless we choose the extreme path of abandoning development altogether and retreating into untouched wilderness."

Then he added, almost reflectively, "If we say we need no development, we are living in denial."

"As long as we travel, learn, work, or even simply switch on a light," he said, "we are already beneficiaries of the earth's abundance."



“Challenges will always be there. But if you genuinely want something, you will make it happen.”

Thus comes the responsibility: to offset, to compensate, to restore. The limestone crushed for cement and the ores extracted for construction and technology each carry an ecological price. “If we do not offset,” he cautioned, “we will exhaust everything we take.”

From his elaboration, it can be understood that ecosystem services exist for this very reason: to protect the environment while acknowledging that humans must use it. Conservation, in this sense, is not an anti-development stance; it is a commitment to mindful reciprocity. And what of nature’s own healing? Yes, he agreed, “nature can survive and regenerate. Forests will reclaim abandoned land; rivers will cleanse themselves; soil will knit its wounds over time. But human pressure is relentless, daily, and accelerating.”

“Natural recovery,” he continued, “can take three or four times longer than the pace of human impact. Intervention, therefore, is not domination; it is assistance. It is the act of slowing degradation and giving nature the time it no longer has.”

For En. Zainal Abidin, human responsibility rests on two intertwined duties: to protect and to use. To sustain, and to survive.

“We intervene,” he said quietly, “not to overpower nature, but to keep our impact from spiralling beyond repair. Our role is to slow the harm and give nature the time it needs to heal.”



In his view, this delicate balance defines humanity’s place within the natural world. “We are not nature’s enemy,” he reflected, “but as its imperfect yet necessary steward, we are constantly learning how to live without taking more than the earth can bear.”

A message for the next generation

To UPM students, he left this insightful conversation with a grounded reminder, “Sustainability demands more than credentials. It requires willingness, endurance, and a readiness to act beyond comfort zones. Knowledge initiates the journey, but responsibility sustains it.”

For him, willingness is the true engine of growth. “When you genuinely want to do something, you will find a way. When challenges come, you will look for the best solution, not an escape.”

“Challenges will always be there. But if you genuinely want something, you will make it happen.” A final note and reminder for the next generation: passion begins the journey, willingness carries it forward, and purpose keeps it alive.

Disclaimer and Writer’s profile (to be put in the footnote)

Disclaimer: The writer also taught BBL3231: Literature and the Environment, a course that explores the relationship between literary texts, ecological awareness, and environmental responsibility. As such, the reflections presented in this interview resonated closely with her own academic engagement with themes of ecosystem balance, sustainability, and stewardship.

Guardians *of the* Green Frontier

The Leadership Journey of Dato' Mohd Radhi Chu in Safeguarding Malaysia's Forest Legacy

Writer: Associate Professor Dr. Mohd Mursyid Arshad

(Alumni Class 2008, 2011 & 2016)

Director

Co-curriculum and Student Development Centre



Forestry is often reduced to a simple narrative, trees, timber, and terrain. Yet for those who dedicate their lives to it, forestry is about stewardship, restraint, integrity, and the quiet courage to stand at the intersection of conservation and development. It is about safeguarding a national trust while navigating competing economic realities. For Dato' Mohd Radhi Chu Abdullah, an alumnus of Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (now Universiti Putra Malaysia), forestry is not merely a career. It is a lifelong responsibility.



Graduating in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Dato' Radhi belongs to a generation shaped by close mentorship, disciplined training, and a deep sense of professional identity. What began as a journey in the classrooms of Serdang has culminated in national leadership, where resilience, adaptability, and integrity continue to define his service as Deputy Director-General of Forestry (Operations and Technical), Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia.

A Cohort Defined by Connection

At a time when class sizes were modest, Dato' Radhi's cohort benefited from an academic environment characterised by close interaction and rigorous mentorship. Faculty members did more than teach; they engaged personally with their students, identifying their strengths, addressing their developmental gaps, and guiding them toward professional maturity.

"We were not just names on a list," he reflects. "Our lecturers knew who we were. They guided us closely and expected us to grow."

Those formative relationships left a lasting imprint. Decades later, he and his batchmates remain closely connected—not only with one another, but also with their former lecturers. The professional and personal bonds forged in Serdang have endured the passage of time, reflecting a culture of relational learning that continues to influence his leadership philosophy.

Life at UPM: Discipline, Independence, and Responsibility

As a recipient of the Public Service Department (JPA) scholarship, Dato' Radhi pursued his studies with a strong sense of responsibility and gratitude. He spent his early university years residing at Fifth Residential College, fully immersing himself in campus life before later transitioning to off-campus living as a non-residential student.

Life in the residential college nurtured not only camaraderie but also resilience. Surrounded by peers from diverse backgrounds, he learned early the value of cooperation, mutual support, and adaptability. At the same time, financial responsibility and personal independence remained essential. During extended semester breaks, he undertook part time employment, experiences that strengthened his work ethic and reinforced his sense of self-reliance.

These were not incidental pursuits, nor were they merely a means of filling free time. They were formative experiences that cultivated discipline, humility, and perseverance long before he embarked on a career in public service. For Dato' Radhi, university life extends far beyond academic instruction. It is a formative ecosystem that shapes values, sharpens adaptability, and nurtures emotional maturity. The lessons learned outside the classroom, he believes, often prove just as enduring as those delivered within it.

Industrial Exposure and Global Perspective

One of the most defining chapters of his academic journey was his industrial training in the timber sector in Perak. That experience bridged theoretical knowledge with commercial realities. It allowed him to see firsthand how forestry operations functioned beyond academic frameworks.

Shortly after graduation, he continued working in the private timber sector. In 1995, he was sent by his company

“We were not just names on a list,” he reflects. “Our lecturers knew who we were. They guided us closely and expected us to grow.”



AUDITORIUM CHENGAL

PEJABAT TIMBALAN
KETUA/PENGARAH



to Hiroshima, Japan, to gain further professional exposure. That international assignment broadened his perspective significantly.

“In Japan, I saw how structure, discipline, and technology were integrated seamlessly into forestry operations,” he recalls. “It showed me that forestry is not static—it evolves.”

His exposure to advanced systems and operational efficiency in Japan deepened his appreciation for technological integration and strategic planning, elements that would later shape and inform his approach in public service.

Entering Public Service: A New Learning Curve

In 1996, Dato’ Radhi commenced his career in public service with the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia. The transition from the private timber industry to government administration introduced broader dimensions of responsibility, governance, and institutional complexity.

He soon came to understand that forestry governance extended far beyond ecological knowledge. It required a firm grasp of policy, strict adherence to procedures, and technological proficiency, especially in evolving domains such as remote sensing and geospatial analysis.

“Remote sensing and data systems were becoming increasingly important,” he notes. “We had to upgrade ourselves continuously.”

His emphasis on lifelong learning remains strong. He believes that today’s forestry curriculum must

integrate data analytics, GIS technologies, and artificial intelligence tools to ensure graduates remain relevant in a rapidly evolving professional landscape. For him, education must anticipate future demands, not merely reflect past practices.

The Forest as the Ultimate Classroom

Despite technological advancements, Dato’ Radhi insists that no digital tool can replace field experience. “You cannot understand forestry from behind a desk,” he says firmly. “You must enter the forest. You must see it.”

Sustainable Forest Management operates within strict procedural frameworks that include boundary demarcation, pre felling inventory, tree tagging, controlled harvesting, and comprehensive reporting. After extraction, forests are placed under a regulated thirty-year rotation cycle, with clearly defined cutting limits based on species to ensure natural regeneration.

Today, many forest reserves are entering their second rotation cycle. In comparison to the first harvest decades ago, yields per hectare have declined, and the number of mature trees has decreased significantly. High value species such as Cengal require particularly careful regulatory oversight due to their slow growth rates and ecological importance.

These realities demand disciplined governance and principled enforcement. For Dato’ Radhi, field experience cultivates more than technical competence; it strengthens credibility and reinforces integrity. Officers must develop physical

endurance, situational awareness, and moral courage to discharge their responsibilities with professionalism and honour. “Reports must be truthful,” he emphasises. “Integrity in reporting is non-negotiable.”

Navigating Constitutional Realities

Malaysia’s forestry governance operates within a constitutional framework that places land and forest matters under state jurisdiction. The federal department may provide coordination and technical guidance through mechanisms such as the National Land Council, but final authority rests with state governments.

This structural arrangement inevitably gives rise to inherent tensions. Peninsular Malaysia currently maintains approximately 4.8 million hectares of Permanent Reserved Forest, slightly below the national target of five million hectares. Although the numerical gap may

Guardians of the Green Frontier: The Leadership Journey of Dato' Mohd Radhi Chu

appear modest, identifying suitable replacement land for areas excised from forest reserves has become increasingly challenging amid expanding development demands and competing land use priorities.

Infrastructure corridors, hydroelectric dams, and energy transmission projects frequently intersect forest reserves. Additionally, approximately 2.2 million hectares have been identified as potentially containing Rare Earth Elements (R.E.E), raising complex environmental and economic considerations.

This demands diplomacy, discretion, and inner strength. Throughout his career progression, from Assistant Conservator of Forests to State Forestry Director and ultimately to Deputy Director General of Forestry, Dato' Radhi has navigated these pressures with steady composure and measured judgment. Leadership, he believes, is not about public confrontation. It is about responsible stewardship within institutional frameworks.

should be used constructively for professional networking, knowledge sharing, and positive influence. When approached responsibly, digital platforms can enhance credibility and broaden one's impact. Above all, he stresses integrity.

"Guard the trust placed in you with vigilance. Never compromise the responsibility you have been entrusted to uphold."

For public servants, and indeed for professionals in any field, trust forms the foundation of credibility. Reputation is cultivated over years of consistent conduct, yet it can be diminished in a single moment. Integrity, he reminds students, remains the most valuable professional asset one can possess.



A Legacy Rooted in Serdang

Looking back on his journey, from his early days at Fifth Residential College to his professional exposure in Hiroshima, and from field assignments to national leadership, Dato' Radhi sees continuity rather than transformation. Each stage of his life built naturally upon the previous one, guided by the same values that shaped him as a young student in Serdang. UPM laid the foundation. Field experience refined it. Leadership tested it.

State governments depend significantly on income generated from timber, mineral extraction, and land utilisation to support infrastructure expansion, flood management efforts, and broader socio-economic development. In this context, forestry leadership requires navigating a careful balance between environmental stewardship and economic necessity.

"It is not about choosing one over the other," Dato' Radhi explains. "It is about ensuring decisions are technically sound and sustainably managed."

Leadership Under Pressure

Senior leadership in forestry requires emotional resilience. Technical advice may be provided, but policy decisions are often shaped by broader political and economic considerations. Departments must implement approved decisions professionally and without public confrontation.

Advice to Students: Resilience in a Digital Age

When asked what message he would offer today's students, Dato' Radhi speaks with clarity and conviction. "Be resilient. Be patient. Challenges are opportunities to grow."

He emphasises that professional life will inevitably present obstacles. The more complex the challenges, the deeper the lessons gained. Patience, in his view, is not a sign of passivity but a form of strategic endurance.

He strongly encourages students to develop strong analytical capabilities. Data literacy, critical thinking, and evidence-based reasoning are indispensable in modern governance. Beyond that, he urges students to familiarise themselves with artificial intelligence tools and digital technologies.

"Information is at your fingertips today. Use it wisely." Social media, he adds,

His story reflects the enduring ethos of Universiti Putra Malaysia, where knowledge is not merely acquired but applied in service of national well-being. In his view, forestry is not about controlling resources. It is about safeguarding a responsibility that transcends generations.

As Malaysia confronts climate change, rapid technological change, and mounting development pressures, leaders like Dato' Mohd Radhi Chu exemplify the quiet strength required to navigate complexity with clarity, restraint, and principle. Forests are more than physical landscapes. They are national heritage, ecological safeguards, and pillars of economic sustainability.

Protecting them requires more than regulations or institutional authority. It requires character. And as his journey so powerfully illustrates, character is cultivated in classrooms, strengthened in the forest, and ultimately affirmed through leadership.

LANDSCAPE CONSULTATION SESSION

EARTHWORM FOUNDATION'S
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Spreading Knowledge and Environmental Sustainability

Lakarim Lanika @ Earthworm Foundation

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Industrial Trainee Bachelor of Arts (Malay Literature) with
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Academic Journey That Shapes a Visionary

Lakarim bin Lanika, an alumnus of Universiti Putra Malaysia, stands as a luminous testament to how academic excellence, passion for the environment, and unwavering commitment to community development can fuse into a purposeful life trajectory. His academic journey is a tapestry woven with determination, curiosity, and an unrelenting pursuit of meaningful knowledge.

His story begins not at UPM, but in the halls of Politeknik Kota Kinabalu, where three transformative years laid the groundwork for the path he would later follow. It was here that foundational skills, discipline, and a budding love

for applied science took root. These early steps would later blossom into an academic achievement that few dare to attempt pursuing a Master's degree immediately after completing his Bachelor's without taking a single break in between.

In 2012, he earned his Bachelor of Science in Wood Technology, a program renowned for its rigorous blend of science, engineering, and environmental understanding. By 2015, he completed his Master of Science in Forestry—an achievement that reflects not merely intelligence, but the relentless spirit of someone fully committed to mastering the field.

What sets Lakarim apart is not just academic attainment, but the imagination he brings into his work. His master's project, which explored the use of banana stems for agroforestry research, demonstrated both innovation and boldness—an elegant fusion of scientific reasoning and creativity. For him, research has always been more than data collection; it is a bridge connecting knowledge to sustainable practices, a tool for real-world transformation.



Discipline and Determination Through Sports

While academia sharpened his intellect, football shaped his character. Representing College 13, Lakarim spent countless evenings at the Bukit Ekspo Field, where the rhythm of the game taught him lessons that no textbook could convey. The football field became a microcosm of life where every sprint refined determination, every teamwork play nurtured trust, and every victory or defeat strengthened emotional resilience.

The sport instilled in him a principle he still holds dearly:

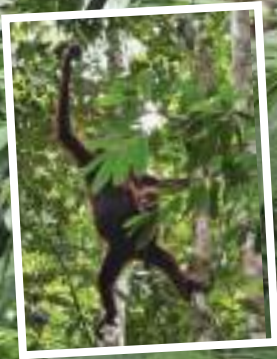
“ If you are good but lazy, it will not succeed.”

This belief has become a compass guiding his professional decisions, his leadership style, and the way he inspires communities across Sabah.

Earthworm Foundation: Five Guiding Stars

After graduation, Lakarim embarked on a new chapter with the Earthworm Foundation, a non-governmental organisation committed to sustainable agroforestry, biodiversity preservation, and livelihood improvement. Their approach is holistic, supporting not only large estates and industry players but also smallholder farmers whose modest fifteen acre lands hold immense potential.

Unlike conventional models that priorities large-scale expansion, Earthworm champions the idea that sustainability begins with people. The foundation is built on five guiding stars that illuminate Lakarim's daily work:



1. Landscape and Forest Conservation

He supports long-term programs in regions such as Sabah and the Southern Central Forest Spine (SCFS), strengthening the balance between economic development and nature's fragile ecosystems. Each initiative is crafted to preserve forests while enabling communities to thrive.

2. Smallholder Resilience

Here, Lakarim helps farmers enhance productivity through Good Agricultural Practices, diversify their income, and obtain certifications that elevate the value of their crops. His work empowers them not just to survive but to prosper.

3. Supply Chain Transformation

He engages plantations and mills to adopt transparent, responsible practices based on NDPE (No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation) principles. This includes ensuring traceability from land to final product, a critical step in sustainable supply chain governance.

4. Worker Welfare and Labour Rights

Advocating for safe, fair, and ethical labour practices, he works closely with stakeholders to monitor compliance, strengthen grievance mechanisms, and uplift worker dignity.

5. Human-Wildlife Coexistence

The most emotionally charged aspect of his work, involves creating pathways for peaceful coexistence especially between smallholders and wild elephants. The foundation develops long-term strategies to minimise conflict and preserve both livelihoods and wildlife heritage.





Navigating Challenges Through Collaboration

One of the greatest challenges in Sabah is the delicate interplay between human livelihoods and wildlife survival. Encounters between farmers and elephants, while majestic in theory, often translate into significant crop damage and economic loss.

Instead of approaching these situations with rigid solutions, Lakarim spearheads collaboration between government agencies, conservation organisations, and local communities. Through open dialogue, shared strategies, and empathy-driven programs, he strives to turn conflict into cooperation. His efforts demonstrate that sustainability is not merely about environmental protection—it is also about nurturing harmonious relationships between all who share the land.

Wisdom Gleaned from Communities

Among the many chapters of his journey, the ones closest to his heart involve the elderly smallholder farmers he frequently visits. These are men and women who have tended their land for twenty to thirty years, weathering the rise and fall of market prices, natural disasters, and shifting policies.

To Lakarim, these interactions are more than work responsibilities—they are living libraries of experience.

He often reminds his team that their role is not to instruct communities but to walk beside them. In his words, the true strength of community engagement lies in:

- Listening deeply
- Learning humbly
- Sharing openly
- Growing together

These encounters have shaped not only his understanding of agriculture, but also his outlook on humanity—lessons that continue to strengthen his leadership as he manages multiple projects across Sabah.

Inspiring the Next Generation

The academic knowledge gained at UPM especially in forestry and agroforestry has equipped Lakarim with a deep appreciation for environmental stewardship. But he believes that knowledge only becomes powerful when it inspires action.

He frequently encourages young Malaysians to reconnect with nature and appreciate the irreplaceable beauty of their homeland:

“We must cherish waterfalls and tropical forests, treasures that cannot be found anywhere else.”

To him, these natural wonders are not merely landscapes; they are classrooms, sanctuaries, and reminders of the biodiversity entrusted to the next generation.

Looking ahead, Lakarim envisions a future where sustainable palm oil and agroforestry practices yield long-lasting benefits. In ten years, he hopes to see thriving ecosystems, empowered communities, and responsible leaders who steward the land with wisdom and empathy.

Conclusion: A Legacy of Knowledge and Sustainability

Lakarim bin Lanika's journey is a harmonious blend of academic discipline, scientific creativity, and heartfelt service to communities. His work bridges the gap between knowledge and action, between science and society, between humans and the environment.

At a time when Malaysia and the world grapple with environmental challenges, his story stands as a bright and hopeful beacon, a reminder that true success is measured not by personal gain, but by the positive and lasting impact we leave on people, communities, and the natural world.

Through his leadership, empathy, and dedication to sustainability, Lakarim continues to inspire future generations to tread lightly, act wisely, and preserve passionately.

Rooting for a Greener Tomorrow

UPM Sarawak's Tree-Planting Commitment

Amid the vast greenery of Borneo, Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak (UPMS) has made tree planting not just a ceremonial act but an institutional commitment to ecosystem restoration, community education, and sustainable partnership.

From the banks of the Kemena River to the hilly grounds of Bintulu, these efforts are led by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Geoffery James Gerusu, a forest hydrologist from the Department of Forestry Science, Faculty of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences whose work connects scientific research, community engagement, and environmental stewardship. His research on forest hydrology and watershed management forms the foundation for many tree-planting and riverbank rehabilitation projects conducted by UPMS in collaboration with government agencies and private partners.



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Dr. Geoffery and his team conduct physicochemical hydrological monitoring at the upper river forested catchment. Using real-time data on water quality and flow dynamics, the team ensures that the regenerated secondary forest, including reforestation efforts, are scientifically optimised to reduce erosion and improve watershed health.

The Science of Stewardship: Hydrology Meets Reforestation

To understand the depth of UPMS's commitment, one must look beneath the surface, literally. The foundation of these initiatives lies in the complex science of watershed management and surface runoff. In tropical ecosystems like Sarawak, where heavy rainfall is a constant climatic condition the relationship between land cover and water flow is indeed critical.

“Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak (UPMS) has made tree planting not just a ceremonial act but an institutional commitment to ecosystem restoration, community education, and sustainable partnership.”

Dr. Geoffery research forms the backbone of these projects. His work explicitly demonstrates how tree cover influences runoff and sediment transport. Without adequate vegetation, heavy rains scour the earth, leading to erosion, river sedimentation, and the degradation of water quality.

Extensive field monitoring conducted has already yielded promising data. Observations indicate that, in restored plots, there is a measurable reduction in surface runoff and improved water infiltration. These findings confirm a vital hypothesis: tree planting, when guided by hydrological science, provides tangible environmental benefits beyond simple carbon storage.



The Quadruple Helix: A Model of Collaboration

Dr. Geoffery and his team have successfully secured funding and grants from a powerful consortium of agencies and corporate giants. The success of these initiatives is directly attributed to the financial stewardship of six key entities, each playing a specific role in the ecosystem of funding:

Bintulu Development Authority (BDA)

As the custodian of Bintulu's urban and industrial planning, BDA has been a primary funder and strategic partner. Their financial commitment aligns with the "Low Carbon Industrial Hub 2030" vision. BDA's funding has been instrumental in transforming public spaces, such as the Bintulu Golf Club and Taman Tumbina, into green lungs, ensuring that the city's rapid infrastructure development is balanced by robust environmental investment.

Department of Environment (DOE), Bintulu branch

As a critical co-organiser and one of the main collaborators, particularly for industrial linkage and partnership, the DOE ensures that the environmental policy is translated into grassroots action by channelling resources into programmes like the "1 RAS 1 Tree" campaign. Their funding supports the logistical backbone of these events, allowing UPMS to bridge the gap between academic research and public awareness.

Health, Safety, Security, and Environment (HSSE), Sarawak Energy Berhad

As a specialised funder, their contribution focuses on impact mitigation. By funding restoration plots, the HSSE Division ensures that energy development projects are counterbalanced by rigorous, scientifically monitored reforestation efforts, complying with high-level environmental impact assessments.

Bintulu Power Station, Sarawak Energy Berhad

As a provider of distinct in-kind funding directed towards local ecological improvements near energy assets, their financial support highlights a localised approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), ensuring that the immediate environments surrounding power generation facilities are rehabilitated and maintained as biodiversity hotspots.

PTTEP Sarawak Oil Limited Sdn. Bhd.

As a vital funding partner, their investment in these greening initiatives reflects a shifting paradigm in the energy sector, moving towards "Net Zero" ambitions. PTTEP's funds facilitate not just planting, but the broader "Nourish Nature, Nurture Future" agenda, supporting long-term sustainability projects that benefit the Bintulu community.

Glenealy Plantations Sdn. Bhd.

As a provider of in-kind funding specific restoration plots within the Nirwana Forest Reserve (specifically Plot 1), their financial contribution serves as a model for how agricultural companies can reinvest in the soil and biodiversity that sustains their industry, funding the planting of 500 trees to restore degraded forest patches.

While scientific rigor provides the roadmap, substantial financial backing provides the fuel. This is made possible by a "Quadruple Helix" model of collaboration, linking the university with government agencies, industry leaders, and the local community.

A Landscape of Intervention: Mapping the Green Footprint

With funding secured from these pillars, UPMS has orchestrated a strategic "Green Web" that spans over 20 distinct locations as shown in Table 1. This corridor of restoration touches every aspect of life in Bintulu, from deep forest reserves to bustling industrial zones and quiet library grounds.

Table 1. Summary of UPM Sarawak's Tree Planting Initiatives by Location and Strategic Partner

No	Planted Area
1	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 1-Glenealy Plantation Sdn. Bhd.)
2	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 2 – Petronas CariGali Sdn. Bhd.)
3	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 3-Pertama Ferroalloy Sdn. Bhd.)
4	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 4-SEB Kuching)
	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 4a-SEB Power Plant)
	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 4b-SEB Power Plant)
5	Nirwana Forest Reserve (Plot 5-OCI TerraSus Sdn. Bhd.)
6	Jungle Trekking Tumbina (BDA)
7	Press Metal, Samalaju Industrial Park
8	SK Labang, Sebauh (BDA)
9	Samalaju Industrial Park - Main office (BDA)
10	Perkarangan Padang Dewan Suarah, Bintulu (BDA)
11	Bintulu Golf Club (BDA)
12	SK Rh Keseng (BDA)
13	Taman Tasek Muhibbah (BDA)
14	Lot Parks Green, RPR Kidurong (Lot 1) (SEB; BDA)
15	Taman Millenium (PTTEP, BDA)
16	Jelalong Est & Rh Ningkan (Glenealy Plantations Sdn. Bhd.)
17	Pantai Tanjung Batu (BDA)
18	Peryatim Bintulu (BDA)
19	Kg. Warisan Jepak (BDA)
20	Taman Tumbina (BDA, PTTEP Sarawak Limited Sdn. Bhd.)
21	Lot Parks Green, RPR Kidurong (Lot 2) (BDA., SEB)
22	BDA Kidurong Library (BDA, PTTEP Sarawak Limited Sdn. Bhd.)
23	Pertama Ferroalloys, Samalaju Industrial Park



The Nirwana Forest Reserve in UPMS serves as the project's ecological anchor. Here, the planting is methodical and massive, divided into specific plots sponsored by corporate partners. A staggering 3,700 trees have been planted across three plots funded by Sarawak Energy Berhad alone. They are joined by Petronas CariGali, whose 1,500-tree plot stands as a testament to corporate environmental stewardship, alongside contributions from Glenealy Plantations, Pertama Ferroalloy, and OCI Terrasus.

However, the initiative is most striking in its effort to revive the industrial heart of the Samalaju Industrial Park. Collaborating with partners like Press Metal, UPMS, under the purview of Dr Geoffery, executed a massive planting of saplings aimed at rehabilitating degraded ecosystems within the industrial premises.

The species selection was deliberate, featuring robust local timber species, such as *Merawan Siput Jantang* (*Hopea odorata*) and *Belian* (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*). This initiative serves as a model for "Sustainable Land Management", proving that industrial progress and environmental health can indeed coexist.

Moving from the industrial to the recreational, UPMS's reach extends to the Bintulu Golf Club. Supported by the BDA's funding, this project focused on preserving Sarawak's sport landscape area. A total of 115 saplings were planted, including rare and indigenous fruit species, such as *Durian*, *Dabai*, *Petai*, and *Kasai*. This effort transformed a leisure space into a living gene bank for local species, ensuring that Bintulu's rapid modernisation does not erase its natural landscape identity.



Nurturing the Future: Representatives from UPMS and partners celebrate a successful planting drive. The 'Nourish Nature, Nurture Future' initiative goes beyond simple planting, serving as a long-term sustainability platform funded by strategic corporate grants.



Staff and volunteers planting native tree species on the slopes of the Bintulu Golf Club, preserving Sarawak's sport landscape area within the city.

Living Laboratories: The Educational Dimension

Perhaps the most enduring legacy of these funded projects is their role in education. UPMS has reimagined its reforestation sites as "Living Laboratories".

Dr. Geoffery has ensured that every tree-planting event functions as a hands-on learning experience. These programmes are never just about manual labour; they are educational platforms where students learn about carbon sequestration, soil health, and erosion control alongside industry professionals.

Students are encouraged to link field data to hydrological modelling and environmental analysis. This helps

them understand the measurable relationship between vegetation cover and water stability. Through these exercises, students build technical competence and environmental literacy, learning that reforestation is not merely about planting, but about restoring ecosystems and sustaining life. Many former students now working in forestry and environmental management credit these field experiences as their first exposure to applied ecological work.



Dr. Geoffery demonstrates proper planting techniques to volunteers and students. By treating these reforestation sites as 'Living Laboratories', he ensures that participants learn the critical science of soil assessment and hydrology behind every tree planted.

Challenges and the Path Forward

Despite the evident successes, the path to a greener Bintulu is not without obstacles. Ensuring sapling survival during the first few years remains difficult in tropical environments prone to heavy rainfall and pest infestations. Maintenance and monitoring require continuous effort from staff and students. Furthermore, biodiversity management demands careful planning to prevent monoculture and maintain true ecological balance.

Dr. Geoffery's team is actively addressing these challenges by introducing post-planting monitoring systems using geospatial mapping and scheduled site assessments. These data-driven steps evaluate survival rates and tree growth, ensuring that every project continues to deliver impact long after the initial planting ceremony has ended.

Looking ahead, UPMS aims to expand its restoration footprint. The university plans to increase planting areas along degraded riverbanks and establish community-managed agroforestry zones. There are also plans to publish long-term studies on the carbon sequestration and hydrological performance of these restored areas, contributing to the global body of scientific knowledge.

A Legacy of Growth

The evolution of UPMS's programmes reflects a deepening sense of purpose. What began as simple community outreach has matured into a comprehensive institutional framework connecting teaching, research, and social engagement. The UPMS's ongoing role in the national 100 Million Trees Campaign reaffirms its position as a key contributor to Malaysia's environmental resilience and climate goals.

For the alumni of UPMS, the work led by Dr. Geoffery represents the university's unwavering dedication to sustainable development. Under his continued leadership, and with the robust financial backing of agencies, such as BDA, DOE, SEB, PTTEP, and Glenealy Plantations, the university persists in demonstrating how scientific expertise and corporate responsibility can come together to create lasting benefits.

As the *Belian* and *Merawan* trees in Bintulu grow taller, and the *Engkabang* roots stabilise the Nirwana forest riverbanks, they stand as living proof of a collective commitment to nurture both minds and the natural world. Each sapling is a small but enduring act of hope, a promise of cleaner air, cooler rivers, and a greener future.

DEFORESTATION, FOOD WASTE AND THE UNEXPECTED LINK

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The global conversation on deforestation often centers on logging, palm oil, and large-scale agricultural expansion. What receives less attention is a quieter but equally important driver: food waste. Every meal discarded, every uneaten plate of rice or spoiled vegetable, represents not only lost food but lost forests. The connection between these two issues is direct, measurable, and deeply relevant to Malaysia's path toward sustainability.




Cut timber signifies forest loss, often driven by the expansion of agricultural land. When food is wasted, the forests cleared to produce it and the carbon stored within them are lost for no purpose.

THE HIDDEN COST OF WASTED FOOD

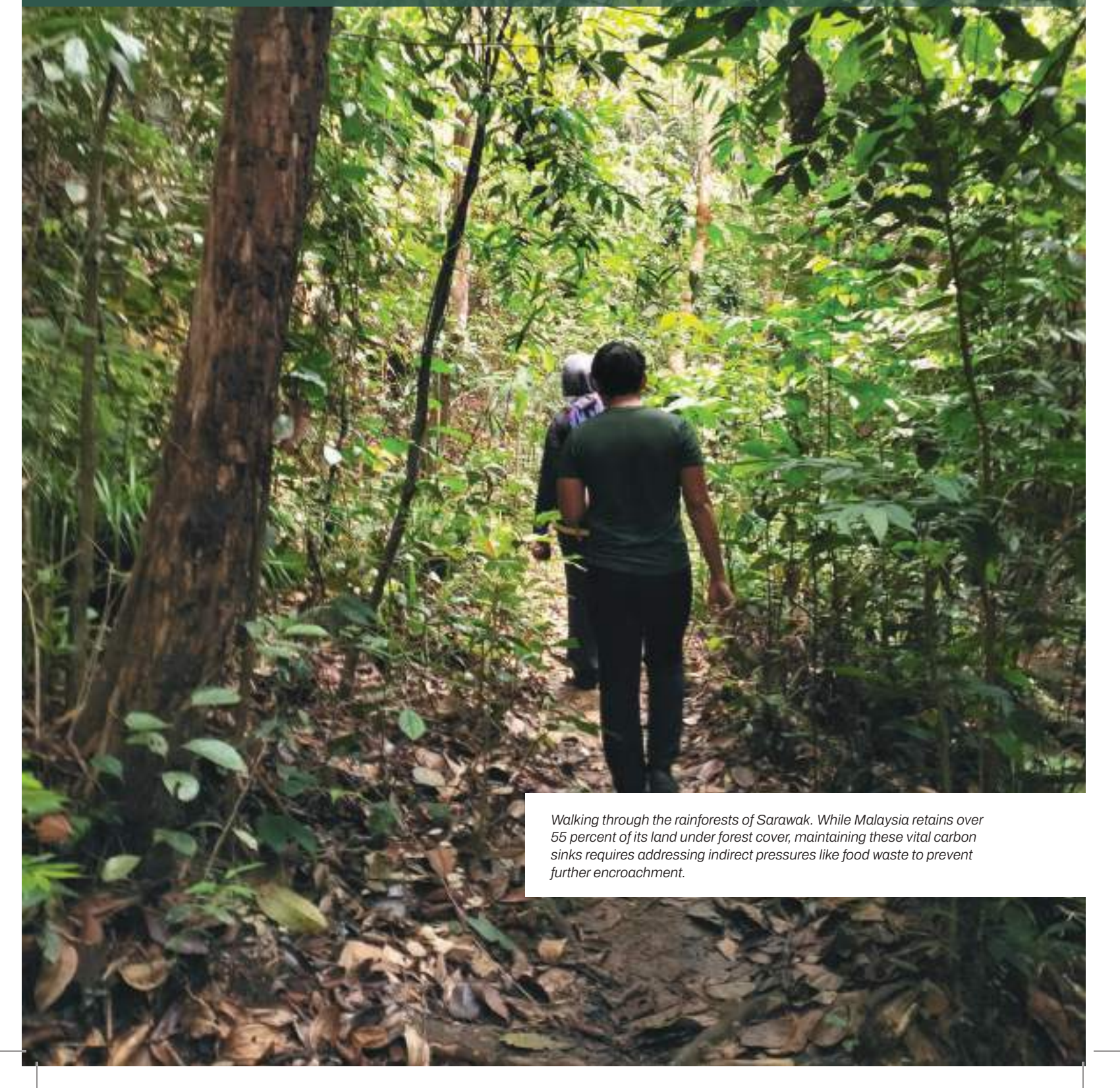
In Malaysia, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Malaysian government estimate that roughly 8.3 million tonnes of food are wasted each year. This translates to about 260 kilograms per person. Much of this waste comes from households, markets, and food services. The implications are enormous. When food is discarded, the land, water, energy, and human labour invested in growing, transporting, and preparing

it are all lost. Agricultural land is one of the world's most limited resources. Globally, around 44 percent of all habitable land is used for farming. In fact, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) reports that agriculture drives about 90 percent of deforestation worldwide. Each time food is produced unnecessarily or wasted, pressure grows to expand farmland into forests.

This link between waste and land use forms a feedback loop. As demand for food rises, more land is cleared to increase supply. Yet, when large portions of that food are thrown away, the cycle continues even though existing land could have met global needs more efficiently. Cutting down forests for crops or livestock that never reach consumers means the destruction was entirely avoidable.



Deforestation and food waste share a hidden thread woven through the global food system. The clearing of forests for agriculture and the discarding of edible food stem from the same inefficiency producing more than what is needed.



Walking through the rainforests of Sarawak. While Malaysia retains over 55 percent of its land under forest cover, maintaining these vital carbon sinks requires addressing indirect pressures like food waste to prevent further encroachment.

Participants in the "Towards Zero Food Waste in Bintulu" initiative convert organic residues into compost. This practice enriches local soils and reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, reframing waste reduction as an ecological act.



Separating organic waste is a crucial step in the Bintulu initiative led by the Bintulu Development Authority (BDA) and Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak (UPMS). By diverting food from landfills, communities actively reduce the pressure to convert more forests for farmland.

DEFORESTATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRESSURE

The expansion of agricultural land remains the single largest cause of forest loss. Across Southeast Asia, forest conversion for oil palm, timber, and smallholder farming has reshaped landscapes and ecosystems. Forests store carbon, protect watersheds, and support biodiversity. When they are cleared, these functions disappear. The process also releases vast amounts of carbon dioxide, worsening climate change. Malaysia still retains over 55 percent of its land under forest cover, a figure that places it among the better-performing tropical nations. However maintaining such coverage requires continuous attention to indirect pressures with food waste being one of them.

Deforestation does not happen only through chainsaws or bulldozers. It also occurs through inefficient food systems. When demand appears higher than it actually is due to food waste, additional plantations and farms are perceived as necessary. This inflated demand encourages further expansion. Reducing food waste is, therefore, not only about saving food but also about reducing the economic signals that drive deforestation.

FOOD WASTE AS A LAND USE ISSUE

When food is wasted, it occupies invisible land. That invisible land cleared is, somehow cleared, cultivated, irrigated, and fertilised for no purpose. If the world were to eliminate food waste tomorrow, global agricultural land use could be reduced significantly. Estimates indicate that nearly one-quarter of the world's agricultural land is devoted to producing food that is never consumed. The environmental cost of that inefficiency are staggering, including soil erosion, fertiliser runoff, greenhouse gas emissions, and biodiversity loss. In effect, food waste carries an ecological footprint comparable to that of deforestation itself.

In Malaysia, the connection is evident in both urban and rural contexts. Urban centres generate the majority of household food waste, while rural areas bear the environmental costs through land conversion and loss of forest resources. Palm oil plantations, paddy fields, and livestock farms all depend on land that may once have been forested. The cycle can be broken only when consumption aligns with actual needs and food waste is minimised.

THE CASE OF BINTULU: TURNING WASTE INTO CONSERVATION

Bintulu in Sarawak offers a concrete example of how local action can address this global problem. The "Towards Zero Food Waste in Bintulu" initiative, led by the Bintulu Development Authority (BDA) and Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak (UPMS), redefines food waste management as a tool for forest conservation. The project's core goal is simple: prevent edible food from ending up in landfills and repurpose inedible waste for useful ends.

The initiative works on several levels. First, it encourages businesses and households to separate edible food for redistribution through community partners. This supports food security for vulnerable groups while reducing waste. Second, it converts organic residues into compost, enriching local soils and reducing dependence on chemical fertilisers. Finally, it promotes public education on the broader environmental consequences of waste. By doing so, the project extends beyond waste bins and kitchens to influence how people view land and resource use.

This approach reframes waste reduction as an ecological act. Every kilogram of food rescued from disposal is a kilogram that does not justify the expansion farmland into forests. When scaled up, such initiatives translate into measurable conservation gains. For example, reducing food waste by even 10 percent can save thousands of hectares from deforestation pressures each year. Bintulu's effort demonstrates how cities and local governments can become allies in protecting forests through efficient food systems.

THE SOCIAL DIMENSION: COMMUNITIES, FOOD, AND FORESTS

Deforestation and food waste are not only environmental programmes but also social ones. Both reflect patterns of consumption, inequality, and management. In many communities, edible food is thrown away while others face food insecurity. Linking surplus food redistribution to environmental outcomes closes this moral gap.

The community-based approach also builds local ownership. When residents understand that their food habits affect nearby forests, behaviour changes follow. Educational programmes run by UPMS and BDA target stakeholders within Bintulu to foster a culture of waste reduction. Such awareness initiatives create long-term change because they shift perception from "waste management" to "resource stewardship." People begin to see that forest protection starts with what they put on their plates.

Participants in the "Towards Zero Food Waste in Bintulu" initiative convert organic residues into compost. This practice enriches local soils and reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, reframing waste reduction as an ecological act.

Separating organic waste is a crucial step in the Bintulu initiative led by the BDA and Sarawak UPMS. By diverting food from landfills, communities actively reduce the pressure to convert more forests for farmland.

BROADER IMPLICATIONS FOR MALAYSIA

Malaysia's commitment to sustainable development includes national strategies on food security, waste management, and biodiversity conservation. Linking these strategies can amplify their impact. Integrating food waste reduction into forest conservation policies will strengthen Malaysia's overall environmental framework. For instance, municipal waste management can include land-use indicators that measure avoided deforestation due to reduced food waste. Likewise, agricultural extension programmes can incorporate food efficiency training for farmers and processors.

Public institutions and private sectors both play roles. Supermarkets can develop redistribution systems for near-expiry food. Restaurants can implement portion control and composting practices. Local councils can provide incentives for waste segregation. Each of these measures contributes indirectly to lowering land-use pressure. At the same time, reducing landfill volumes curbs methane emissions, further cutting Malaysia's carbon footprint.

FORESTS BEYOND TREES: THE CLIMATE CONNECTION

The deforestation- food waste link also has a climate dimension. Forests act as carbon sinks, while landfills emit methane, a greenhouse gas far more potent than carbon dioxide. When food decomposes in landfills, it accelerates warming. Conversely, preventing waste conserves both land and carbon. By reducing food waste, Malaysia contributes not only to forest protection but also to its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Forest protection and food system reform share a common foundation: efficiency. Producing only what is needed, consuming what is produced, and recycling what remains form the cycle of sustainability. The carbon released from forest loss and wasted

food undermines global climate goals. Addressing both simultaneously creates a multiplier effect -lower emissions, stronger ecosystems, and healthier communities.

LEARNING FROM LOCAL INNOVATION

The Bintulu project provides a blueprint for replication. Other regions in Malaysia, especially those at the interface of agriculture and forests, can adapt similar models. Universities, local councils, and civil groups can collaborate to monitor food flows, engage residents, and design localised composting or redistribution hubs. What makes the Bintulu initiative powerful is not its scale but its integration of environmental and social goals. It acknowledges that preventing waste is as much about community engagement as it is about technical waste management.

This alignment of academic research, local governance, and citizen participation represents a new frontier in sustainability. Instead of waiting for top-down policy shifts, local initiatives generate immediate results while feeding data and insights back into national frameworks. Such cross-sector collaboration embodies what sustainability experts call "systems thinking"- addressing interconnected problems with coordinated solutions.

RETHINKING FOOD, LAND, AND VALUE

At the heart of the issue lies a fundamental question: what do we value? Modern food systems often separate production from consequence. Consumers rarely see the forest cleared to grow their food or the energy used to process and transport it. Food waste makes this disconnect visible. It forces reflection on how convenience and abundance have come at the cost of ecosystems.

Reducing waste redefines value. It honours the effort behind every meal—from the farmer who cultivates the crop to the forest that gives way for its field. Recognising this chain of responsibility turns environmental awareness into daily practice. It shifts sustainability from an abstract goal to a lived ethic.



A landscape marked for agricultural use. Globally, agriculture drives about 90 percent of deforestation; reducing food waste curbs the false economic demand that fuels this expansion into forest territories.

THE PATH FORWARD

Malaysia's challenge is not a lack of knowledge but a need for integration. Food waste, land management, and forest conservation are often treated as separate policy areas. Connecting them can unlock significant gains. Governments can adopt metrics linking reduced food waste to avoided land conversion. Educational campaigns can frame waste reduction as environmental protection. Research institutions can model how changes in consumption influence deforestation risk. Even small steps, like composting or mindful purchasing, accumulate into national impact when adopted widely.

For the public, understanding the

link transforms how sustainability is perceived. Every household that reduces waste participates in forest conservation. Every restaurant that donates surplus food helps protect biodiversity. These are tangible, everyday acts with cumulative power.

A NEW NARRATIVE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The link between deforestation and food waste reframes the story of sustainability. It moves from distant forests to the immediacy of the dinner table. It reminds us that environmental stewardship begins with mindful consumption. When food waste is reduced, fewer forests need to fall. When communities act collectively, local change contributes to global stability.

In Bintulu, the collaboration between the BDA UPMS captures this spirit. Their initiative stands as a reminder that sustainability does not require grand gestures but consistent, thoughtful actions. Each meal saved, each compost heap maintained, and each awareness session held preserves not only food but forests.

CONCLUSION

Deforestation and food waste share a hidden thread woven through the global food system. The clearing of forests for agriculture and the discarding of edible food stem from the same inefficiency producing more than what is needed. Addressing one helps solve the other. For Malaysia, where forests remain a vital national asset, tackling food waste is a strategic pathway to conservation.

The message is simple yet profound: when food is saved, forests are spared. From the kitchens of Bintulu to the rainforests of Sarawak, every effort to cut waste helps secure the natural foundations on which all life depends. Reducing food waste is not only an environmental duty but a moral and practical step toward sustainable coexistence between people and nature.

A landscape marked for agricultural use. Globally, agriculture drives about 90 percent of deforestation; reducing food waste curbs the false economic demand that fuels this expansion into forest territories.

Uplifting the Sustainability of Sarawak's Forests

The Role of Education, Research, and Community

**Writer: Dr. Ahmad Mustapha
Mohamad Pazi**

(Alumni Class 2010, 2014, 2017 & 2022)
Senior Lecturer
Department of Forestry Science
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Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak (UPMS)

Sarawak's forests rank among the oldest and most biodiverse tropical rainforests in the world. Green canopies stretch across lowlands, hills, karst formations, coastal zones, and peatlands. These landscapes shelter thousands of endemic species and sustain the livelihoods of many local communities.





Alongside natural forests, plantation forests have emerged as a sustainable resource management strategy. They supply wood-based industries while easing pressure on natural forests. In an era of climate change, habitat degradation, and rapid development, Sarawak's forests play an increasingly vital role in education, research, conservation, restoration, and community development.

I strengthen these efforts by linking knowledge, society, and sustainability. As an academic at the Department of Forestry Science, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia Sarawak, I remain committed to strengthening forestry education through field-based, living laboratory learning.

This approach allows Diploma in Forestry students and related programmes to gain holistic insight into forest ecology. Activities include tree inventories, forest navigation, soil analysis, mini trail construction, and practical training at sites such as Bako National Park and Eucalyptus plantation forests in Bintulu.

The integration of theory, technology, and fieldwork builds a comprehensive understanding of tropical forest management. It also highlights the role of plantation forests in sustainable timber production, carbon mitigation, and land restoration. This approach cultivates discipline, leadership, and scientific thinking among students.



In research, I explore forest ecology, tropical soils, plant biodiversity, and ecosystem responses to land-use change. My studies include plantation forests such as Eucalyptus and Acacia, with focus on soil fertility, understorey biodiversity, and nutrient cycling. This work involves field sampling, physical and chemical soil analyses, ecosystem mapping, and close collaboration with local communities. Strategic partnerships with the Sarawak Forest Department, Sarawak Forestry Corporation, CIPTA Reforestation Sdn. Bhd., and inland communities allow research findings to inform more sustainable management of natural and plantation forests. At the same time, my supervision strengthens research culture and nurtures student interest in biodiversity and sustainable forest management.

Conservation also forms a core focus. I stress early environmental education through community-based learning. I lead students in programmes such as Bako Coastal Cleanup Day, tree planting, biodiversity awareness camps, environmental interpretation workshops, and outdoor activities with rural communities. These initiatives raise awareness of natural forest protection. They also introduce responsible plantation forest management as a key measure to reduce pressure on natural forests. Collaboration among universities, schools, and communities fosters long-term understanding of forest sustainability.



In restoration, I focus on areas affected by logging, peat fires, and soil erosion. Through ecosystem restoration projects, I lead efforts to plant native species, enrich dipterocarp forests, rehabilitate degraded soils, and establish riparian buffer zones. In plantation forests, I promote integration of native species, farm waste management, soil structure improvement, and fire risk reduction through sound silvicultural practices. Community participation accelerates restoration and deepens public understanding of ecosystem functions and local biodiversity protection.

At the community development level, I prioritise environmental literacy and the strengthening of local knowledge through education, field activities, and direct engagement. These initiatives reach multiple levels, from primary schools to inland communities. The goal remains clear, to nurture a knowledgeable, science-based society with a strong sense of responsibility toward forest and environmental management.



Looking ahead, the future of Sarawak's forests depends on integrated quality education, high-impact research, science-based conservation, systematic restoration, and responsible plantation forest management. Plantation forests will play an expanding role in meeting global timber demand without exploiting natural forests. They also support the state's green economic growth. The efforts and leadership of young researchers

such as myself show how academics move beyond lecture halls to serve as bridges between knowledge, society, and sustainability. With support from government, universities, industry, civil society organisations, and local communities, Sarawak stands well placed to emerge as a model for tropical forest management and to safeguard its natural heritage for future generations.

Rediscovering Regenerative Amazing Product by an Equally Amazing Agro-Entrepreneur



Writer: Baharudin Mohd Shah

(Alumni Class of 1987)

Mohamad Hafidz Ariffin is an amazing entrepreneur with a charismatic personality and thrives on challenges and changes. Born on 22th January 1985, at Pantai Medical Centre, Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur, he was brought up in a middle-class family of 6 siblings, in the vibrant district of Shah Alam. He was the fourth and spent his whole life in Shah Alam. His parents, formerly from the corporate sectors are now retirees and part time cultivator. After completing his basic education, he joined UPM (Universiti Putra Malaysia), taking the Diploma and Bachelor of Human Resource course for 6 years (2004-2009). Soon after, he started his career as a human resource officer in Tabung Haji Travel (2009). However, he stayed there for only 2 months as his enterprising spirit could not fathom him sitting ideally in a low-paying job in an unchallenging environment.



Comfortable Career in Petronas

His next job was more challenging and lucrative. He joined PETRONAS (Petroliam Nasional Berhad) in 2009 as a Human Resource Executive, and he travelled around the world wherever PETRONAS conducted its business operations. He worked in Malaysia, KLCC (Kuala Lumpur City Centre), Terengganu, Sarawak, Sabah, Indonesia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Turkmenistan, Iraq and Dubai. He spent nine years in PETRONAS, working in various operational capacities, mostly in the training section involving the transfer of technology and skills. He was thus in a highly sought-after position within a dynamic and demanding environment. For any ordinary person, that would have been enough for a comfortable life, allowing him to rest on his laurels. But this was not the case for Mohamad Hafidz. Surely, there had to be more that life could offer.

Embarking on an Audacious Journey

Unexpectedly, at a relatively young age in his early thirties, he resigned from his high-paying and prestigious position at PETRONAS to begin an audacious and challenging journey into the business world. He started Al-Sakinah Enterprise in Janda Baik, Pahang, in 2018, using his personal savings as start-up capital to plant fig

trees. His fascination with the unique qualities of fig trees began during his overseas trips. For the layman, a fig tree may appear just like any ordinary tree, with nothing particularly special about it. However, to Mohamad Hafidz, it is a high-value crop producing premium fruits capable of generating many by-products. He was attracted to the fruit because it provides energy, aids digestion, and promotes better sleep.

Benefits of Figs

Not many Malaysians are involved in the large-scale fig planting business. Most fig fruits are imported from overseas, such as from Turkey and Peru, and are mostly available during the summer season between July and October. During winter overseas, fig plants cannot be cultivated. However, fig trees can be planted all year round in Malaysia as they require only warm and dry weather, adequate sunlight, and well-regulated water supply. There are also many varieties of fig trees from around the world that can be suitably planted locally. Thus, he saw the planting of fig trees as a highly profitable agricultural opportunity in Malaysia.

A single fig tree can live for more than ten years and can bear fruits every four months, producing as much as 40 kilograms, even when planted on a relatively small acreage. Each segment node of the fig tree grows

according to a predictable pattern of leaves and fruits until it reaches more than ten feet in height. Each fig fruit can produce various by-products, and the fig tree can be propagated into up to thirty seedling cuttings. Its leaves can be made into herbal tea, while its latex sap may possess medicinal qualities. In fact, the tree has virtually zero wastage.

From a nutritional perspective, figs are rich in antioxidants, vitamin A, vitamin B1, calcium, iron, phosphorus, manganese, sodium, potassium, chlorine, and fibre, and may help address colon health, diabetes, and cholesterol-related conditions. The fruits are sold at between RM60 and RM80 per kilogram, while seedlings are priced at RM45 per cutting. However, the fruit is delicate and soft, making it vulnerable to attacks by animals and birds. Therefore, a fully protected greenhouse structure is required to safeguard the crops.

Kamikaze Venture into Fig Business

When Mohamad Hafidz first ventured into fig plantation, it was almost a kamikaze-style undertaking, daring



and risky. He had very limited knowledge of agriculture, apart from brief exposure during his time at UPM planting water spinach (kangkong) and occasionally accompanying his parents to their farms. His mentors in fig cultivation were friends, the internet, trial-and-error learning, and advice from his parents.

However, entering the agricultural industry presented a very different reality compared to the oil and gas sector within the PETRONAS

ecosystem, which is strongly supported by the government. It was truly a new ball game and a baptism of fire as he navigated this new fig business.

As a result, he had to sell both his house and car during the early stages of operating his first company. This three-year gestation period, with minimal income, made him question whether it had been worthwhile to leave his lucrative position for such uncertainty. Nevertheless, with strong

support from family and friends, he persevered and overcame criticism and rejection. He re-examined his strategies and developed new management and marketing approaches. Learning from his mistakes, he eventually discovered the right techniques to operate and grow his business.

Road to Success with Afta Benefigs Sdn. Bhd.

He later renamed his company Afta Benefigs Sdn Bhd (a combination of the phrase “Benefits of Figs”) in 2019 with a renewed vision. He realised the importance of having committed partners and managers to support the cultivation of fig trees. He collaborated with small-scale community enterprises to produce various by-products such as fruit jam, hot sauce (sambal), juice, and other fig-based products. Out of his 28 varieties of fig trees, eight have been successfully commercialised into products.

His customers include restaurant and hotel owners, health juice manufacturers, and individuals seeking fig latex for its medicinal properties. He also markets his farm as an ecotourism

destination and educational training centre for visitors interested in learning about the fig business. His products are available online through platforms such as Shopee, and are also exported to Singapore.

He believes strongly in the sharing of knowledge as part of a lifelong philosophy, as advocated by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). All these linkages serve directly and indirectly in strengthening the marketing network for his products. In other words, he had to diversify his business approaches and build multiple strategic networks.

He also restructured his company's corporate culture and organisational values, inspired partly by the management practices he experienced at PETRONAS. Across his six plantations, each site is managed by a plantation manager. Altogether, he employs about 14 staff members, mostly locals, who are expected to demonstrate strong work ethics and honourable values.

His company operates seven days a week, guided by yearly, monthly, weekly and daily work schedules, with clearly defined productivity targets so

that every employee understands their responsibilities at all times. Planting problems are identified early and addressed immediately, while daily sales and marketing activities are carefully recorded. According to him, and as taught in Islamic teachings, every day should bring some form of progress, no matter how small.

He also ensures that his workers are treated fairly and supported to achieve a decent livelihood, enabling them to buy a car, get married, and build a house through the fruits of their labour in the fig business.

Big Plans Ahead

His next major challenge is to become one of the leading producers of figs in Southeast Asia, as countries such as Thailand are also rapidly developing this industry. He aims to produce one tonne of fig fruits per day. To achieve this ambition, he continues expanding his plantations in Jasin, Hulu Selangor, Banting, Janda Baik, Pasir Puteh and Shah Alam, with plans for further expansion. He also intends to recruit more competent staff, and the establishment of a processing factory is currently in the pipeline.

An Insightful Reflection

He regrets that fig cultivation remains relatively uncommon in Malaysia, and institutions such as UPM and MARDI (Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute) have yet to introduce specialised courses or extensive research programmes on fig cultivation. In the United States, researchers have already developed new varieties of figs.

The fig fruit is revered in many religions and forms part of traditional cuisines across cultures, including Malay cuisine. It is also mentioned in the Holy Quran in Surah At-Tin (Chapter 95) in Juz' Amma, which serves as a powerful inspiration in promoting the significance of this remarkable fruit.

Finally, he advises young people who aspire to venture into business to cultivate passion, determination, and perseverance. Above all, they must equip themselves with the necessary knowledge and skills. He regards the fig fruit as a gift from God, and reminds aspiring entrepreneurs to always remember Allah, for Allah will always remember those who strive sincerely in their endeavours.

It is also mentioned in the Holy Quran in Surah At-Tin (Chapter 95) in Juz' Amma, which serves as a powerful inspiration in promoting the significance of this remarkable fruit.



HONOURING THE UNSUNG CHAMPIONS

The Birth of the Pingat Emas Razlan Putra

Graduation day is often regarded as the pinnacle of a university student's life. It marks the end of years of perseverance, sacrifice, and determination — the countless late nights completing assignments, the moments of triumph and disappointment, and the laughter and camaraderie shared with friends. It is a day when every ounce of effort finds its reward.

Writer: Syed Razlan Ibni Syed Putra Jamalullail

(Alumni Class of 1972)



Traditionally, the first day of a university's Convocation Ceremony is dedicated to honoring outstanding academic achievers. These exceptional students are called to the stage to receive the university's Gold Medal or other forms of recognition from the Chancellor, in front of faculty members, peers, and most proudly, their parents. For many, this moment represents the ultimate academic accomplishment — the peak of university life.



A Different Kind of Excellence

In many parts of the world, such as the United States, recognition is not limited to academic brilliance alone. High-performing student athletes are often celebrated and supported through scholarships and special programs. For these individuals, the university's playing fields serve as springboards to professional sporting careers. Athletic excellence is seen as a complement to intellectual growth, and universities take pride in nurturing both.

In Malaysia, however, the spotlight has traditionally shone only on academic high achievers during convocation. While this is well-deserved, it leaves another group of equally dedicated students — the sportsmen and sportswomen — in the shadows.

As a former athlete who represented Kolej Pertanian Malaya (now University Putra Malaysia, UPM) from 1968 to 1972 in rugby, soccer, hockey and tennis, and who also had the honour of playing rugby for the Malaysian Under-23 Team, I have long carried a quiet discontent. I have witnessed firsthand the sacrifices made by university athletes — the grueling training sessions,

long hours spent at camps, travels for competitions, and the constant juggling of sports and academic obligations.

Despite their immense contributions and the prestige they bring to their university and the nation, these student-athletes seldom receive the recognition they rightfully deserve.

The Birth of an Idea

It is from this conviction that the idea for a special award, the Pingat Emas Razlan Putra was born. This medal is designed to honour UPM's outstanding sports personalities who not only excel in their respective sports but also demonstrate commendable academic performance and character. Beginning from the 2025–2026 academic session, this award will be known as the Pingat Emas Razlan Putra.

The aim is simple yet profound: to celebrate the spirit of balance between intellect and athleticism, and to inspire future generations of students to strive for excellence in both.

This initiative, I believe, is the first of its kind in Malaysia, embodying the concept of "Sports Personalities with Brains." It acknowledges that success is not measured solely by grades or medals, but by the discipline, leadership and resilience that come from mastering both mind and body.

Award Criteria

To ensure that the Pingat Emas Razlan Putra upholds its prestige and integrity, a university committee was established to define the qualifying criteria. The recipient must:

- Represent University Putra Malaysia (UPM) in an official sport.
- Achieve a minimum CGPA as determined by the university.
- Demonstrate exemplary leadership, discipline and sportsmanship.
- Serve as a role model to fellow students.
- Compete in a sport officially recognized by UPM (even if an athlete wins an Olympic gold, if the sport is not represented in UPM, the award cannot be conferred).



Honouring the Unsung Champions the Birth of the Pingat Emas Razlan Putra

Only one sportsperson will receive this medal each year, and, most significantly, it will be presented on the first day of the Convocation Ceremony — alongside the academic Gold Medal recipients.

This symbolic gesture places the student-athlete on equal footing with academic achievers, affirming that excellence in sports is no less worthy of honour.

More Than Just an Award

The *Pingat Emas Razlan Putra* represents more than just recognition — it represents a shift in mindset. It encourages UPM’s athletes to aim higher, knowing they too have the opportunity to walk proudly across the stage on Convocation Day, not only as champions on the field but as accomplished scholars.

Through this initiative, we hope to nurture graduates who are mentally sharp, physically resilient, and socially responsible — individuals who embody the balance of intellect and strength. These are the leaders Malaysia needs: well-rounded, adaptable and capable of managing challenges both in life and in leadership.

A Legacy for the Future

The *Pingat Emas Razlan Putra*, named in honour of its donor, is not merely an award — it is a legacy. It is a tribute to all those student-athletes who have silently sacrificed, persevered, and represented their university and nation with pride. It stands as a reminder that true excellence lies in balance, where passion meets intellect, and where dedication meets achievement.

These “Sports Personalities with Brains” are the nurturing champions of body and mind for Malaysia’s future.

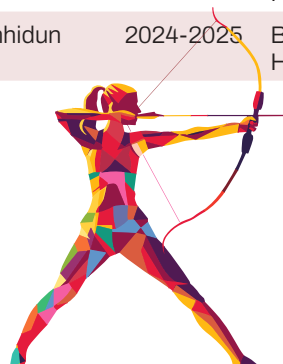
List of Recipients

Since this medal was introduced in UPM Convocation Ceremony 2015/2016, up to now, there are 10 recipients of this medal. These recipients had to undergo an interview process by the University Awards Committee and chosen by the criteria and guidelines predetermined by the owner of the medal and the university.



The recipients are as follows

Name	Session	Program	Sports
Mohd Shahrudin Said	2015-2016	Bachelor of Science (Human Resource Development)	Rugby
Nazuridin Abd Latif	2016-2017	Bachelor of Education (Physical Education)	Rugby
Nur Syafazliyana Mohd Ali	2017-2018	Bachelor of Education (Physical Education)	Net ball
Raja Norsharina Raja Shabuddin	2018-2019	Bachelor of Education (Physical Education)	Hockey
Syed Mohamad Syafiq Syed Cholan	2019-2020	Bachelor of Science (Human Development)	Hockey
Ang Ming Shan	2020-2021	Bachelor of Science (Human Resource Development)	Archery
Muhammad Safiy Md Said	2021-2022	Bachelor of Education (Physical Education)	Rugby
Jonathan Nyepa	2022-2023	Bachelor of Science (Human Resource Development)	Athletic
Muhamad Hafiezie Sudin	2023-2024	Bachelor of Education in Physical Education with Honours	Rugby
Nor Asfarina Isahyifika Isahhidun	2024-2025	Bachelor of Education in Physical Education with Honours	Hockey and Futsal





Sometimes, the path we choose may seem unusual or different from others—but it could be the trail others follow in the future. That's the lesson Tan Kim Hock embodies. As the recipient of the Alumni Gold Medal during Universiti Putra Malaysia's 46th Convocation Ceremony in 2021, his journey reflects a deep commitment to nature and a pioneering spirit in arboriculture, a field still relatively new among students in Malaysia. Arboriculture is the science and practice of cultivating, managing and studying trees, especially those in urban or landscaped environments (parks, streets, and gardens). It focuses on the health, safety, and appearance of individual trees, rather than forests.



ABSORB EVERYTHING LIKE A SPONGE

Tan Kim Hock

Writer: Siti Farhana Saludin
(Alumni Class of 2015 & 2019)

Tan pursued a Bachelor of Forestry Science at the Faculty of Forestry and Environment (formerly known as the Faculty of Forestry), a decision he describes as truly life-changing. His academic experience was a hybrid one: the first two years were filled with hands-on learning, while the latter two were conducted online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During those early years, Tan touched everything in nature, from collecting plant specimens for dendrology classes to setting up mist trap and insect traps to study different species of butterflies and birds. He also joined river cruises to observe fireflies and participated in forest explorations with memorable moments that left a lasting impression. Even during the pandemic, Tan remained actively engaged, attending webinars hosted by FRIM, PERHILITAN and various NGOs to maintain his bond with nature.



FUELED BY PASSION, DRIVEN BY PURPOSE

To deepen his connection with the environment, especially during his semester break, Tan volunteered with organizations such as Roots and Shoots Malaysia (RASMA) and Malayan Rainforest Station (MRS). His volunteer work included tree planting, beach clean-ups, forest trail maintenance, and creating social media content for virtual awareness campaigns. He also completed an internship with Eclipse Green Sdn. Bhd., an arborist company, where he gained valuable hands-on experience that strengthened his commitment to the field.

After graduating, Tan began his career as an assistant arborist at Eclipse Green Sdn. Bhd. and had the opportunity to sit for the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certification exam, a globally recognized credential for tree care professionals. He officially became an ISA Certified Arborist last year. His pursuit of knowledge continues as he now embarks on a PhD in Plant Pathology, focusing on urban mycology—the study of phytopathogenic macrofungi associated with tropical urban trees in Malaysia. By continuing the study, he hopes he can bridge the knowledge gap about arboriculture and helps to advance our tropical arboriculture practices.



UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES

Among his fondest memories as a student was participating in the Wildlife Management Camp at Sultan Idris Shah Forest Education Centre (SISFEC). For four days, students practiced wildlife survey techniques, including setting up mist nets and live traps (rodent cage traps) to study birds and small mammals. Each group was assigned different locations in the forest to install traps and check them daily.



Tan recalls how his group struggled to catch anything. They were feeling disappointed until the final day, when they discovered a squirrel and a common tree shrew in their traps. “We screamed in joy, laughed, and even teared up a little,” he shared. “Against all odds, we had become the only group to successfully capture small mammals using live traps. That moment of pure excitement and shared achievement will always stay with me—it’s a perfect reminder of how unpredictable and rewarding nature can be.”

YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE

Studying at UPM shaped Tan’s character, giving him the exposure, opportunities and freedom to explore his passion for nature. Tan confidently says that he is a good arborist not because of the certificates, but because of passion for saving trees, persistence and eagerness to learn. It also taught him how to manage stress, both as a student and now as a working professional. His method is simple: reconnect with nature. He often walks along the aisles of Bukit Ekspo, sometimes barefoot, to ground himself and recharge after a long day. Other than that, he also prefers to go “off-road” at Bukit Ekspo

wandering into the bushy forested areas to explore the wild. As he loves to connect with nature, he often takes pictures of the trees, termites, insects and microfungi that he encountered along the way.

As an alumnus and arborist, Tan offers advice to those considering the same path: don’t be afraid to enter the field just because you lack experience. Learning is a continuous journey, and the key is to stay curious and absorb everything like a sponge. He also emphasizes the importance of safety when working outdoors. Looking ahead, Tan hopes to share his experiences as an academian at UPM, serving future generations with the same passion that guided his own journey.

“Berilmu Berbakti.”

“We screamed in joy, laughed, and even teared up a little,” he shared. “Against all odds, we had become the only group to successfully capture small mammals using live traps.”

'Lose Yourself in the Service of Others'

Writer: Lee Si Jie

(Alumni Class of 2025)

**A Parable of Language Gap
that Inspires me toward
a Meaningful Purpose of Life**

*Completed 1st class honour in Bachelor
of Dentistry through consistent work and
continuous commitment.*



I still remember the first time I tried to speak the Malay language. I felt tongue-tied, not fluent in my pronunciation, and eventually lost my confidence. As a young Malaysian, how is it I am a stranger to my own National Language? This question haunted me since the first time I stepped foot into the university world.

I was brought up in a comfort zone mainly using the English and Chinese languages. The usage of the National language only existed in the textbook and answering examination question papers. However, once I was admitted into Universiti Putra Malaysia taking the Bachelor of Science in Dentistry as my first choice, it became the main trigger that changed the future direction of my life. Who ever thought this journey will challenge me in an unexpected way I never thought of.

My first semester began when the world environment was still reeling under the COVID-19 pandemic . During that time all classes were still conducted online and communication with our peers was only through the WhatsApp application. The interchange between students was in the colloquial Malay language in an informal way. I began to realize that there was an unseen gap between us, namely, the language gap.

Once the pandemic restriction was lifted and we returned back into the campus, the real life experience of university life began. I participated in the Undergraduate Orientation Camp organized by the Tan Sri Mustaffa Babjee College (KTMB). It was in this camp that I began my first experience in mixing around with other undergrads from various backgrounds. It was here I came face to face with reality: the language used in school was the formal language but the language my friends were using was the casual everyday language in an informal way.

Actually, I had the choice to continue using the English language. Nevertheless, I chose a more difficult route. I was determined to master speaking the Malay language as I believed that language was the bridge to get closer and better understanding of another person.

I realized that all this while, I was living in a bubble. I lived in a too small a world. At the same time I felt excited. This was the real Malaysia, full of a variety of voices, dialects and background that I had never met in my bubble. In mixing around and listening to their stories, I learned to understand more deeply the identity of my country.

The Decision and Transforming Myself

Since the day of the camp, I made a decisive decision: I did not want to be in the comfort zone anymore. I was determined to be an active person throughout my university life, not only to gain recognition, but to be a mature

individual with the ability to see this country in various perspective and to be always trying to improve myself.

This determination to exit from my comfort zone , had the consequent of extraordinary involvement in campus activities. In my 4-year stay in UPM I was involved in 57 activities, and received 17 recognitions. I was the head of 7 community programs and collected RM87,000 in sponsorship that benefitted one thousand students in the Malaysian communities. The figures were not my objective but they represented my commitment to break free from by comfort zone and to be aware that the real calling of my true life was to serve the community.

As I developed my confidence in just wanting to speak the Malay language had unexpectedly opened the door to an acceptance of a bigger trustworthy leadership role . I began my calling by becoming a member of the College (KTMB) Representative Academic Council secretariat. This early duty led me to hold a bigger responsibility as a Deputy Vice President (Academic and Research) of UPM's Student Representative Council (MPP).



Recipient of the Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Award during the 49th Universiti Putra Malaysia Convocation Ceremony in recognition of excellent in academic, leadership and dedicated service while studying in the university.

Insightful understanding of the community participation approach, as Portland State University student and representing Malaysia in cross cultural learning.



Leading a delegation of 21 students to Kyoto University as Director of Kakehashi Program: Japan Cultural Exchange for exchanging of knowledge and international culture.





Representing Malaysia for five weeks in the United State of America through participation in the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Academic Fellows (YSEALI) program

Winning the Best Student (1st Place) Oral Poster Presentation Award in conjunction of Malaysian Dietitians' Association Conference 2025 through Final Year Project Research (FYP) of high impact with focus on the management of food waste.



My involvement spanned across the borders. I initiated and directed the exchange knowledge program, known as Kakehashi: Japan Cultural Exchange that brought UPM students to Japan. Later I was selected as Malaysia representative to the United States under the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Academic Fellows (YSEALI) program, fully funded by the U.S. Department of State. This global exposure widen my understanding in the development of the community through the bottom-up approach, that focused on the real needs of the community.

Knowledgeable and Message of Unity

During all my journey, I faced multiple challenges and failures. However, I learned that success is not to outdo another person, but a manifestation of a strong mind and determination to keep going despite being tested.

Failure and pressure are not only a test but an ocean of experience, to test your maturity

I believe the Malay language is not only for communicating of ideas, but also a bridge to unite the people of various races. On the other hand unity does not mean to let go our mother-tongue and forgot our cultural values. We do not have to choose one and abandon the other, as what is important is to be prepared to learn, to adapt oneself, to understand and to respect.

UPM taught me that success does not only mean academic achievement, but to how the knowledge is used to serve the society, which is in-line to what Mahatma Gandhi said: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Throughout my involvement in the community service, I learned the meaning of empathy, communication skills and last but not least to acquire the purpose of my life.

Today I feel grateful that I manage to walk away from my comfort zone. For those who are still in doubt, please remember: Do not think of the challenges ahead, and do not wait until you feel confidence to act. Take action and seize the opportunity as the first step which might be minor but it can be a catalyst for the most critical change.

This is my story on how I learn from my own weaknesses, adhere to the values and objectives in life and grow up as a human being, which eventually is rewarded with the Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Award during the 49th Universiti Putra Malaysia Convocation Ceremony.

Inculcating Environmental Awareness

The Journey of

Abdul Raqib,

UPM Faculty of Forestry Alumnus

Abdul Raqib Rasid, an alumnus of the Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), exemplifies how academic knowledge can be meaningfully integrated with practical application in human development and environmental sustainability.

Beginning as a forestry student, he has since carved out a professional path through Radiant Retreat, an organisation that integrates nature-based outdoor activities with team development and ecological awareness.

Writer: Suziana Che Wil

Pusat Perhubungan Alumni
Universiti Putra Malaysia

“I am originally from Sabah and completed my Bachelor of Science in Forestry at UPM between 2011 and 2015. After graduating, I began my industrial training with Radiant Retreat, and since then I have built my career here,” said Abdul Raqib.

From Student to Nature Professional

Initially, Raqib did not intend to pursue a career in eco-education. However, his passion for the natural environment led him to Radiant Retreat, where he saw an opportunity to combine forestry knowledge with human development.

“I was drawn to this organisation because it is nature-based. I felt this was the best platform for me to share knowledge about forests and trees with the younger generation, while increasing their awareness on sustainability,” he explained.

His journey reflects how interest can evolve into expertise. “Gradually, I discovered my passion for individual development. From there, I decided to make this place my platform for meaningful work,” he added.

Integrating Forestry with Human Development

Radiant Retreat emphasises team-building activities conducted in natural environments. For Raqib, this creates an opportunity to connect forestry knowledge with personal growth.

Inculcating Environmental Awareness: The Journey of Abdul Raqib, UPM Faculty of Forestry Alumnus



“Perhaps only 20 to 30 percent of my technical forestry knowledge is directly applied here. But nature becomes the medium for human development. Activities such as hiking, river trekking and replanting not only educate participants about ecosystems, but also shape their character and sense of responsibility towards the environment,” he said.

According to him, the effectiveness of programmes is not measured solely by large-scale activities. What matters most is participants’ awareness of their own actions.

“At the very least, they begin to change within themselves. They learn how to manage waste, make sustainable choices and appreciate natural ecosystems. That is the real impact,” he emphasised.





Challenges in Nature Conservation

Raqib highlighted that the greatest challenge in nature conservation lies in public awareness.

“Many people know that forests are important for biodiversity, but not everyone truly understands their significance. Our role is to instill early education and continuous awareness.”

As an alumnus, he views his role as a bridge between society and nature.

“As alumni, we possess knowledge. We must become effective connectors so that development and conservation can progress hand in hand,” he added.

Strict principles and procedures form the foundation of every activity at Radiant Retreat.

“We adhere to regulations such as the ‘leave no trace’ principle. All activities are conducted with minimal environmental impact. In addition, we are involved in restoration initiatives such as mangrove planting as a way of giving back to nature,” he explained.

Professional Achievement: From Trees to Awareness

During his ten years with Radiant Retreat, Raqib considers his greatest achievement to be tree replanting initiatives.

“Although the number of trees may be small, every action has an impact. Every small action matters,” he said.





These activities reflect his dedication to environmental sustainability and ecological education.

He also emphasised that his academic experience at UPM played a major role in shaping both his competence and character.

“UPM developed my personal skills through assignments and presentations, my interpersonal skills through group work and my environmental awareness. It was not just academic knowledge, it shaped my mindset and values,” he shared.

His time at UPM transformed him from someone with limited awareness of conservation into what he described as a modest advocate for sustainability.

Academic Memories That Left a Mark

Raqib’s memories of UPM extended beyond lectures and classrooms. Field trips were among the most meaningful experiences.

“Almost every weekend we had field trips. We learned about trees, assessed ecosystems and experienced nature directly. These moments left invaluable memories and shaped my interest in forest management,” he explained.

College life also played a significant role in shaping his social development. As a student of College 13, he participated actively in various inter-college activities, including sports and collaborative programmes.

“We often joined cross-country events, and College 13 was known for having the largest participation. These experiences built leadership skills and strong network friendships,” he said.

From Interest to Professionalism

Raqib’s interest in forestry began during his school years, particularly in timber and forest products. Although his original ambition was to join the forestry department, he now focuses on human development through nature.

“Each year, we visit forests abroad: Japan, New Zealand, Australia and others, to understand different management approaches. These experiences broaden my perspective on forest management,” he explained.

Although he does not work directly within a forestry department, he finds fulfillment in getting new knowledge and learning about forest systems in different countries.

“I am able to compare forest management practices abroad with those in Malaysia. Every country has its own methods, but public compliance with regulations is the key to success,” he observed.

Core Principles in Nature-Based Activities

Raqib stressed that the core principles in all nature-based activities are respect and readiness to learn.

“Before entering a forest area, we must assess risks and understand the environment. The principle of respect is fundamental. No matter where we are, we must respect nature and adhere to regulations,” he said.

These principles ensure safety, sustainability and optimal learning experiences for participants.

Alumni as Agents of Change

Abdul Raqib’s journey from UPM student to professional at Radiant Retreat demonstrates how academic education, practical experience and enduring values can shape an individual into a competent, responsible and impactful agent of environmental change.

“Knowledge without action is like a tree that bears no fruit. What I do today is rooted in what I learned at UPM - knowledge, personal skills and interpersonal skills,” he reflected.

He concluded with a principle that continues to guide his career:

“Knowledge without action is meaningless. With knowledge we serve is my principle and every small act to protect the environment will create a significant impact for future generations.”

From Serdang to National Conservation

Writer: Suziana Che Wil

Pusat Perhubungan Alumni
Universiti Putra Malaysia

A UPM Alumnus' Journey in Building Expertise in Ecotourism and Wildlife Management

Behind the green landscape of the Serdang campus, many professionals have emerged to lead key sectors of the nation. In the field of conservation and wildlife management, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) is a familiar and respected name. Numerous senior officers, state directors and division heads in related government agencies are alumni of the Faculty of Forestry, UPM.

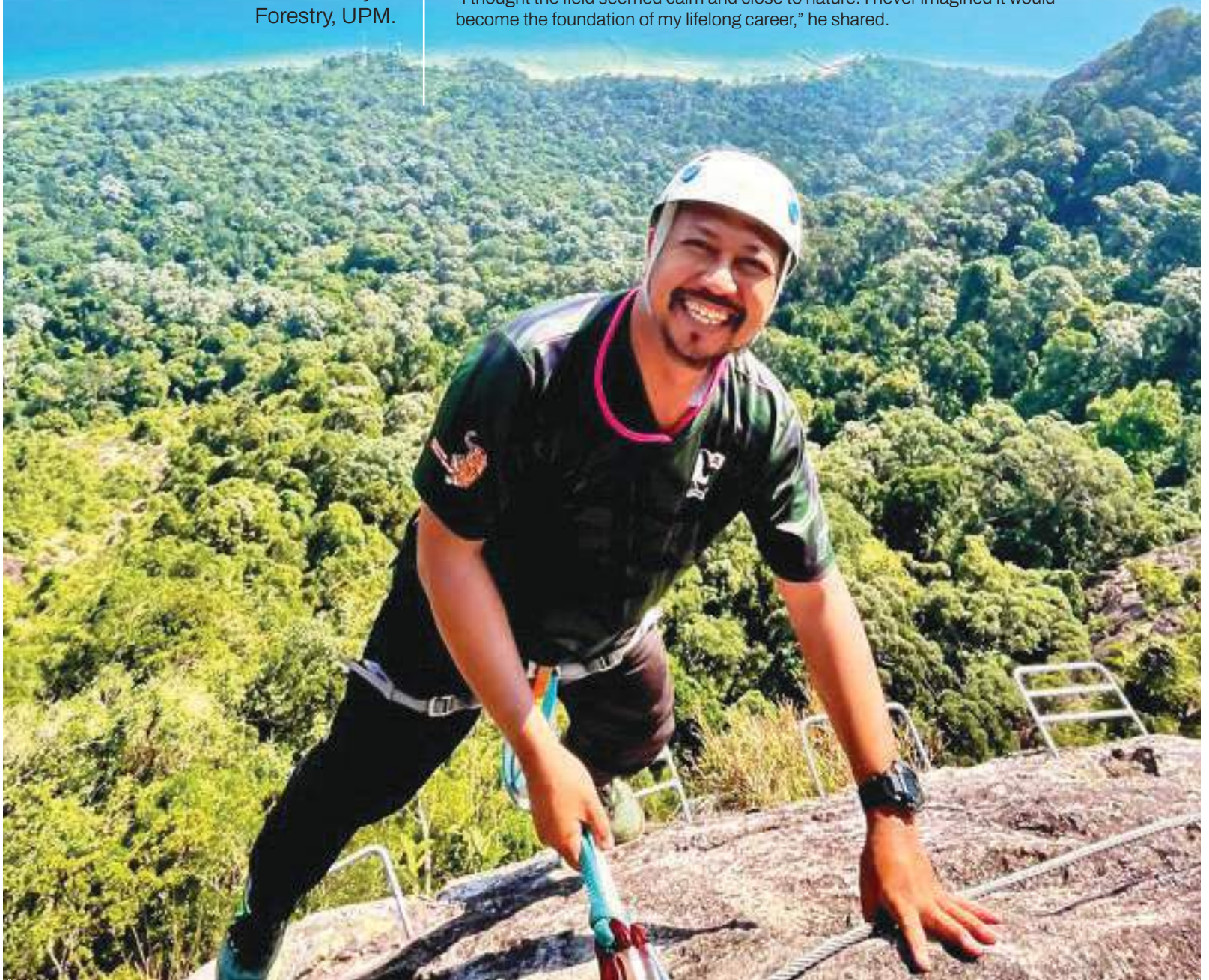
One of them is Abdullah Zawawi bin Yazid, a native of Gua Musang, Kelantan, who built his career from a diploma student to a senior officer in the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, commonly known as PERHILITAN.

His journey reflects a blend of academic knowledge, field experience and continuous learning that forms the basic foundations of education at UPM.

Beginning in Serdang

Born in 1980 and educated in Kota Bharu during his early years, Abdullah joined UPM in 1998 to pursue a Diploma in Forestry at the Serdang campus. At that time, academic pathways were not as diverse as they are today, yet he felt forestry aligned naturally with his interests and abilities.

"I thought the field seemed calm and close to nature. I never imagined it would become the foundation of my lifelong career," he shared.



From Serdang to National Conservation: A UPM Alumnus' Journey in Building Expertise

As a student at the Serdang campus, he resided at Kolej 2 throughout his diploma studies. The programme was compressed into two intensive years with a relatively heavy credit load. Though demanding, the experience cultivated discipline and resilience. Upon completing his diploma in 2000, he continued his studies at the degree's level in Forestry Science, specializing in Forest Recreation.

His interest in forest recreation gradually developed into a genuine passion. Courses involving environmental interpretation, visitor management and field experience left a lasting impression. Being someone who enjoyed outdoor activities and an active lifestyle, the practical exposure and interaction with lecturers helped shape the professional values he carries to this day.

Beyond the lecture halls, Abdullah was actively involved in college activities, including representing Kolej 2 in inter-college football tournaments. Participation in co-curricular programmes and residential college life made his Serdang experience more than academic. It became a process of character building.

"At UPM, I learned many things beyond academics. It was here that I built my self-confidence from a village boy chasing dreams to becoming a forestry and wildlife graduate. What began as childhood play in the forest grew into a solid professional foundation," he reflected.

A Strong Alumni Network

Interestingly, the majority of senior officers in his current department are also UPM alumni. In one office alone, nearly all key officers, from new recruits to directors, are UPM graduates.

"Sometimes during major meetings, it feels like an alumni reunion," he joked.

His relationship with former lecturers has remained strong even after graduation. He continues to stay in close contact with several lecturers from the Forestry Faculty, including those who taught him at both diploma and degree levels. Professional discussions often take place in a relaxed setting, demonstrating that alumni connections remain one of UPM's greatest strengths.

"My relationship with UPM has never been severed. Even today, discussions with my former lecturers continue, especially on forest management projects and collaborative programmes that can benefit UPM students, particularly those from the Forestry Faculty," he said.

Finding His Career Direction

After graduating in 2003, Abdullah began his career as a tour guide at Taman Botani Putrajaya. There, he attempted to apply his knowledge of interpretation and visitors management acquired at the university. However, the experience was brief.

"I felt the management approach there did not align with what I had learned. Perhaps I was still idealistic at that time," he said with a smile.

He later worked on several projects with UPM lecturers, including in urban forestry and business management. Yet, his desire to return to conservation and natural resource management grew stronger.

At the end of 2005, he pursued a research-based master's degree while simultaneously applying for a position in the public service. In 2007, he was appointed to serve in PERHILITAN — a turning point that firmly anchored his career in wildlife conservation.

Strengthening His Foundations in the Field

His first posting was in Kedah. Over five years (2007–2012), Abdullah gained hands-on experience in wildlife management and departmental administration. It was during this period that he encountered the realities of fieldwork which was far more complex than classroom theory.

In 2011, he was promoted to Grade 44 and transferred to headquarters under the Biodiversity Conservation Division. In the years that followed, he assumed greater responsibilities in managing wildlife conservation beyond national park boundaries.





A significant milestone came in 2019 when he was posted to Kuala Gandah, Pahang — home to several of Malaysia’s key conservation institutions, including the Biodiversity Institute, the Malayan Tigers Conservation Centre and National Elephant Conservation Centre. There, he became directly involved in training programmes, public awareness initiatives and the management of conservation of iconic national species.

Returning to Serdang as a Student

Despite having achieved a stable position in his career, Abdullah felt there was still room to deepen his understanding of ecotourism. During the Movement Control Order (MCO) period, he made the decision to return to UPM to pursue a research-based master’s degree at the Faculty of Forestry.

The decision was not merely to add academic credentials, but to improve management practices within his department.

“I realised that there are not many active experts in ecotourism within the department. Many senior officers have retired. I felt it was necessary to revisit and relearn the correct concepts,” he explained.

His research focused on service quality aspects in ecotourism, particularly within the conservation centres. Although classes were conducted online, he and his peers made the effort to arrange face-to-face discussions with supervisors whenever possible.

At times, they scheduled intensive sessions over several days to complete thesis chapters systematically. The experience reminded him of his student days — albeit now balanced with responsibilities as a senior officer.

He successfully completed his studies within two years and graduated in October 2023.

Reassessing Knowledge and Practice

Returning to academia offered him a renewed perspective. Abdullah admitted that he once believed practical experience alone was sufficient. However, revisiting fundamental theories and concepts made him realise that certain practices required refinement.

“When we relearn the theory, we begin to see that some things we have been doing may not be entirely accurate from a conceptual standpoint,” he said.

He is now more cautious when delivering lectures or training sessions on ecotourism. When necessary, he invites lecturers or academic experts to ensure that the content shared is based on sound knowledge.

According to him, the department functions as a manager and regulator, while the industry players operate on the ground. Therefore, strong theoretical understanding is crucial in shaping effective policies and approaches.



From the forests of Kedah to Kuala Gandah, from lecture halls to conservation centres, his journey reflects the enduring spirit of UPM alumni which is always learning, **always serving, and always returning to the roots of knowledge** in Serdang.



The Enduring Spirit of Serdang

Abdullah Zawawi's journey from Kolej 2, Serdang to Malaysia's national conservation centres demonstrates that education at UPM goes beyond awarding degrees. It shapes character, nurtures professional networks and fosters a culture of lifelong learning.

The close ties between alumni and faculty strengthen a sustainable knowledge ecosystem. Many of his contemporaries who now hold key positions across various states still regard UPM as a meeting point — whether in formal meetings or casual reunions.

For Abdullah, returning to Serdang as a student after more than a decade in service was a humbling experience. It was a reminder that in conservation and environmental management, learning never truly ends.

“Academic knowledge builds the foundation. Field experience matures us. But continuous learning is what ensures we remain relevant,” he concluded.

From the forests of Kedah to Kuala Gandah, from lecture halls to conservation centres, his journey reflects the enduring spirit of UPM alumni which is always learning, always serving, and always returning to the roots of knowledge in Serdang.



Highlights of Alumni Activities

UPM ALUMNI RELATIONS CENTER ENGAGEMENT VISIT TO THE FORESTRY DEPARTMENT OF PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

8th January 2025 - Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia (JPSM)

Alumni Relations Centre, led by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Mokrish Md Ajat, visited the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia (JPSM) to engage with UPM alumni working there. The session aimed to reconnect with alumni, share strategic ideas, and explore collaborations that benefit both alumni and the university. Several distinguished alumni were identified in key positions at JPSM. The initiative emphasized strengthening alumni ties and fostering new programmes for the benefit of alumni, students, and UPM.



PUBLIC UNIVERSITY ALUMNI COUNCIL (MALUMNI) MEETING NO. 1/2025

13th January 2025 - Putrajaya

The Public University Alumni Council (MALUMNI) Meeting No. 1/2025 took place successfully in Putrajaya, discussing key matters such as financial reports, strategic alumni initiatives, and strengthening alumni relations with universities. Members proposed new programs to enhance alumni engagement, aiming to build a more dynamic network. The meeting highlighted the collective commitment to advancing higher education in Malaysia.



DIALOGUE FORUM WITH DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI & RETIREES FROM FACULTY OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES IN CONJUNCTION WITH FPP'S 50TH GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION
17th January 2025 - ARCUPM

UPM's Faculty of Educational Studies (FPP) held a Dialogue Forum in celebration of its 50th Golden Jubilee. Themed "Tracing the Golden Journey," the event welcomed UPM Vice-Chancellor, the Director of ARCUPM, and distinguished alumni and retirees. Moderated by Dr. Siti Salina Mustakim, the forum featured two notable panelists, Dato' Dr. Mohd Majid Konting and Mr. Mohd Azlan Abdul Mubin, who shared their experiences, contributions, and memories of FPP.



ALUMNI JOURNEY: SMK LUNAS TEACHERS RETURN TO ALMA MATER WITH STUDENTS

17th January 2025 - ARCUPM

ARCUPM welcomed a visit from SMK LUNAS, Kulim, Kedah, involving 35 students and 8 teachers, including two alumni from the Faculty of Educational Studies (FPP), UPM: Puan Rabiatal Alawiyah (Class of 1994) and Puan Rashidah Othman (Class of 2010). The visit aimed to introduce students to higher education opportunities at UPM. The alumni shared their academic and career experiences, while ARCUPM introduced its role in connecting graduates with UPM. The visit inspired students to strive for excellence and pursue higher education.





REUNION EVENT FOR RETIREES & ALUMNI OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES, UPM

18th January 2025 - Astana Putra, UPM

UPM's Faculty of Educational Studies (FPP) hosted a Reunion for Retirees & Alumni at Astana Putra, UPM, as part of its 50th Golden Jubilee Celebration. The event, led by Dr. Mohd Fadzil Che Din, welcomed distinguished alumni and key figures, including former ministers, national leaders, and academicians. Key highlights included a poetry recital, a Golden Jubilee video screening, and a cake-cutting ceremony. A Baton Handover Ceremony symbolized leadership continuity within FPP. The event concluded with group photos, marking a memorable gathering that strengthened alumni relations.



REUNION EVENT MEKAR "GEMPUR ALPUTRA II" 2025

25th January 2025 - Dewan Besar, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Cultural And Arts Centre (PKKSSAAS), UPM

UPM hosted the Gempur ALPUTRA II 2025 reunion MEKAR for PALAPES alumni, reuniting members from the earliest intakes to the most recent. The event was attended by prominent figures, including ministers, high-ranking officers, and academics. The reunion strengthened alumni relations with UPM and provided a space to share past experiences. It also highlighted PALAPES' role in developing outstanding leaders who contributed to national progress.





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BIASISWA YAYASAN PAK RASHID



BIASISWA SOH KIM MEE

CLA EMPIRE

BIASISWA YAYASAN SAID



BIASISWA MAHASISWA PUTRA

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BIASISWA 2 GENERASI



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BIASISWA AGRICSC '94



BIASISWA CYPERUS 92'



BIASISWA CYPERUS 92' 2.0



BIASISWA CYPERUS 92' 3.0



BIASISWA CYPERUS 92' 4.0



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

29 PENAJA BIASISWA

73 PENERIMA MANFAAT BIASISWA



IMBAS KOD QR UNTUK MAKLUMAT LANJUT



BRIDGING SUCCESS: YAYASAN PEKEMA SCHOLARSHIP INTERVIEW SESSION

28th January 2025 - Persatuan Pengimpot dan Peniaga Kenderaan Melayu Malaysia (PEKEMA)

Yayasan PEKEMA Scholarship interview was held in Cyberjaya, attended by four SPE students and panelists from ARCUPM, HEPA, Bursar, Division of Academic UPM and PEKEMA. The scholarship supports outstanding students from B40 and asnaf backgrounds, with a requirement to engage in extracurricular activities. This initiative aims to ease students' financial burdens and encourage academic success. ARCUPM strongly supports alumni-led financial aid efforts for students in need.



FINAL YEAR PROJECT SHOWCASE WITH INDUSTRY COLLABORATORS FSKTM SEM 1 2024/2025 SESSION

7th February 2025 - Dewan Abdul Azim (FSKTM), UPM

Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology (FSKTM), UPM hosted the "Final Year Bachelor Project Showcase with Industry Collaborators" program, officiated by Dean Dato' Prof. Dr. Shamala K. Subramaniam. The event involved industry mentors, including UPM alumni, who guided and evaluated students' final year projects. The program fostered stronger alumni-student relations while allowing alumni to contribute and gain experience.





MEETING OF JAM MENARA PUTRA WARISAN BUDI UPM AND RACIAL KARNIVAL PERPADUAN

14th February 2025 - ARCUPM

A meeting was held to discuss funding for the UPM Putra Warisan Budi Clock Tower, aiming to preserve and enhance this historical landmark. Additionally, discussions for the Racial Unity Carnival focused on planning activities to strengthen alumni and community ties. Key representatives from various UPM entities and notable figures attended, contributing valuable insights to ensure the success of both initiatives.



SEJAM BERSAMA ALUMNI (SEBA) 1.0: LEISURE TALK 2.0 – ALUMNI EXPERIENCE SHARING

15th February 2025 - Main Lecture Hall (FBSB), UPM

Leisure Talk 2.0 – Alumni Experience Sharing at FBSB, UPM successfully provided students with insights and advice from accomplished alumni across various industries. The program helped students in career planning, industrial training selection, and exploring postgraduate opportunities. It also motivated them through real-life experiences shared by alumni, guiding them on challenges post-graduation. With an engaging and interactive environment, the event aims to continue fostering strong student-alumni connections and preparing future graduates for a competitive job market.



CHERISHED MEMORIES: PENDITA 3 BATCH 1981-1984 REUNION AT UPM

26th February 2025 - L' Apparenti Restaurant & Deli, UPM

7 alumni from the 1981-1984 Diploma in Agriculture, Kolej Pendita 3, reunited at UPM on February 26, 2025, for a nostalgic gathering at L' Apparenti Restaurant & Deli, UPM. The event featured speeches by Mohd Fauzi Mohd Zain and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Aqlima Ahmad, creating a meaningful platform for alumni to reconnect and share life experiences. A lunch session filled with laughter and cherished memories strengthened old friendships that have lasted for over 40 years.





PENDITA 3 DIPLOMA IN AGRICULTURE BATCH 1981-1984 VISIT SESSION
26th February 2025 - ARCUPM & PAUPM

Pendita 3 Diploma in Agriculture alumni (Batch 1981-1984) visited the UPM Alumni Relations Center and UPM Alumni Association to reconnect with their alma mater. The session introduced them to various alumni initiatives and programs, as well as opportunities to contribute back to UPM through knowledge, experience, and support. The visit strengthened alumni ties with the university, ensuring continued engagement and mutual benefits.



ALUMNI UNITY CARNIVAL MEETING WITH UPM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (MPP)
19th March 2025 - ARCUPM

The UPM Alumni Relations Center held a meeting with the Student Representative Council (MPP) to discuss the UPM Alumni Unity Carnival. The event aims to strengthen alumni-student relationships, provide a networking platform, and facilitate knowledge sharing. MPP representatives played a key role in planning engaging activities and proposing innovative ideas to ensure the event's success. The Alumni Relations Center appreciates the collaboration with MPP, believing that teamwork and unity will make the carnival a meaningful and impactful occasion for both alumni and students.



BENCHMARKING VISIT FROM UTM ALUMNI TO ARCUPM
19th March 2025 - ARCUPM

The UPM Alumni Relations Center hosted a benchmarking visit from UTM ALUMNI to strengthen collaboration and exchange best practices in alumni management and EKSA. Led by Assoc. Prof. Ts. Dr. Mohd Hisyam Bin Rasidi, the UTM ALUMNI delegation discussed alumni engagement, fundraising strategies, and alumni data management, along with best practices for creating an efficient and sustainable work environment through EKSA. The visit reinforced the commitment to fostering strong alumni networks and collaboration between UPM and UTM.



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SECOND MEETING – MENARA PUTRA WARISAN BUDI LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

7th April 2025 – Menara Putra Warisan Budi, Serdang

The second meeting on the Menara Putra Warisan Budi landscape improvement focused on planning and initial steps for Phase 1, aimed at creating a greener and more user-friendly environment. The discussion was enriched by insights from Prof. Madya Dr. Shureen Faris Abdul Shukor and Dr. Mohd Fabian Hasna, contributing to the successful planning of the project.



YPR PUTRA CAKNA SERIES 2

10th April 2025 – Mini Auditorium 1, TNCPI Building, Serdang

YPR Putra Cakna Series 2, titled “Chemical Residues in Agricultural Products: What You Need to Know?”, featured Puan Siti Norliza Mohd Din, a Yayasan Pak Rashid scholarship recipient, sharing insights on chemical residues in agriculture and their impact on food safety. The program provided a valuable platform for knowledge exchange, strengthened ties among scholarship recipients, alumni, and the UPM community, and was attended by UPM’s Vice-Chancellor, senior officials, and distinguished guests.



ALUMNI HARI RAYA GATHERING 2025

10th April 2025 – ARCUPM

The Alumni Hari Raya Gathering 2025 brought together UPM alumni and staff for a joyful and meaningful celebration filled with laughter, warm conversations, and camaraderie. The event highlighted the strong bonds, friendship, and unity within the UPM alumni community, fostering both nostalgic memories and new connections.





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ALUMNI SHARING SESSION AND ALUMNI GET-TOGETHER 2025
10th April 2025 – Mini Auditorium 1, TNCPI Building

A sharing session by the former students of the late Cikgu Pak Rashid, namely Tuan Haji Ghazali Salamat and Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Putra Jamalullail, was held under the YPR Putra Cakna Series 2 program. The event was attended by YBhg. Dato' Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah, UPM Vice-Chancellor; YBhg. Dato' Raihan Shariff, President of PAUPM; YBhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Hj. Mazlan Lazim; Prof. Dr. Arifin Abdu, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs & Alumni); and Hj. Hassan Mohd Rashid, son of the late Pak Rashid, along with his wife. The session was followed by the Alumni Get-Together 2025 in conjunction with the Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebrations, where a variety of festive dishes were served.



PAUPM EXCO HARI RAYA GATHERING
15th April 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM held its EXCO Hari Raya Gathering in conjunction with the 9th EXCO Meeting. The gathering was held in a potluck style, where each EXCO member contributed their own dish. The celebration concluded with a group photo session.



TNCPI MEGA HARI RAYA CELEBRATION
24th April 2025 – TNCPI

PAUPM participated in the annual TNCPI Mega Hari Raya celebration, joined by five major entities who prepared various dishes for guests. The program featured a "Best Booth" competition, spontaneous quiz sessions, and karaoke. Present were the PAUPM President and EXCO, Prof. Dr. Azmawani (CEO PBS), En. Shahrman (Head of TNCPI Administration), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Siti Aqlima Ahmad (Director of ARCUPM), and Pn. Nurul Hidayah (UPM Board of Directors Member).





ALUMNI MEET & GREET WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
25th April 2025- Putrajaya

The Alumni Meet & Greet at the Department of Agriculture brought together UPM alumni serving in the public sector to celebrate achievements and explore strategic collaborations. The session, attended by senior officials and alumni leaders, strengthened professional networks and highlighted alumni as vital bridges between academia and industry, contributing to the advancement of Malaysia's agricultural sector.



PRESENTATION OF THE COMPLETE TRANSLATED AL-QURAN
30th April 2025 - KOSASS, UPM

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) attended the Presentation of the Complete Translated Al-Quran organised by MPK KOSASS 2024/2025, aimed at strengthening ukhuwah, unity, and spiritual values among students, alumni, and college management. ARCUPM extends its appreciation to Yayasan Ade Azhar for their generous contribution, and congratulates KOSASS for the successful organisation of this meaningful programme.



K10 MOBILITY PROGRAMME (SETAREX YUNNAN) & SEBA INTERNATIONAL 3.0 & 4.0 (GLOBAL EDITION)
2nd May 2025 – KLIA 2

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) attended the flag-off ceremony for the Kolej Sepuluh (K10) student mobility programme to Yunnan, China, under SEBA International 3.0 and 4.0 (Global Edition). The programme aims to provide students with international exposure and enhance soft skills through global engagement, with support from UPM alumni Teacher Shirley (Class of 2017) and Dr. Morion (Class of 2025), reflecting strong alumni–university collaboration.



SEBA GLOBAL EDITION 3.0: DR. MORION

6th May 2025 – Yunnan Minzu University, China

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre proudly participated in the SEBA 3.0 Global Edition program at Yunnan Minzu University, China, featuring a sharing session by Dr. Morion, UPM Class of 2025. The session highlighted the importance of language mastery as a key tool in promoting cultural diplomacy and international collaboration. This initiative showcased the potential of UPM alumni to act as cultural ambassadors, leveraging cross-cultural communication skills. It also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Quality Education (SDG 4), Partnerships for Goals (SDG 17), and Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure (SDG 9), reflecting UPM's commitment to contributing to global development.



UPM ALUMNI GATHERING: TOWER CLOCK CONTRIBUTION

7th May 2025 – Cyberjaya

A casual UPM alumni gathering was held to support the Alumni Tower Clock project, highlighted by the presentation of contribution cheques. Attendees included YBhg. Dato' Nurulhidayah binti Ahmad Zahid (University Board of Directors), YBhg. Prof. Madya Dr. Siti Aqlima Ahmad (Director, UPM Alumni Relations Centre), YBhg. Dato' Raihan Bin Sharif (PAUPM President), YBhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri (Dr.) Mazlan Bin Lazim (AL-PUTRA President), YBhg. Datuk Sylvester Entri Muran (UPM Sarawak Alumni Chairman), and YBhg. Prof. Dr. Mohd Hasmadi bin Ismail (Faculty of Forestry and Environment, UPM). The gathering strengthened alumni bonds and underscored their commitment to building a lasting legacy for the campus.



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COURTESY VISIT BY YAWATIM
9th May 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM received a courtesy visit from the Malaysian Foundation for the Education of Orphans and the Poor (YAWATIM), led by YM. Prof. Dato' Dr. Haji Tengku Mahmud bin Mansor, President of PEYATIM and Executive Chairman of YAWATIM. The visit aimed to introduce PAUPM to YAWATIM's waqf programs and to invite collaboration in supporting the education of orphans and underprivileged children.



SEBA 4.0: GLOBAL EDITION – CIKGU SHIRLEY
10th May 2025 – Lan Yuan Nature Education School, Yunnan, China

Cikgu Shirley, Alumni UPM Class (2017) and educator at Lan Yuan Nature Education School, shared her inspiring journey from academic achievements to leadership and career experiences in a one-hour hybrid SEBA 4.0 session. Attended by 77 participants (65 in-person, 12 online), the session motivated UPM students and the local community to pursue their dreams confidently.



55TH ANNIVERSARY OF KPM 70
17th May 2025 – L'apprenti UPM

KPM 70 celebrated its 55th Anniversary at L'apprenti UPM, attended by nearly 50 alumni. The event included various activities such as a lucky draw. Also present were PAUPM President, Dato' Raihan Sharif, and Secretary-General, Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed.



ARCUPM EKSA BENCHMARK VISIT TO UKM QUALITY ASSURANCE CENTRE

19th May 2025 – Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) conducted a benchmarking visit to UKM's Quality Assurance Centre to exchange insights and best practices on the implementation of the Conducive Ecosystem for Public Sector (EKSA). The visit aimed to enhance knowledge, experience, and inspiration, supporting ARCUPM's continuous pursuit of excellence in EKSA practices.



INSPIRATION FORUM "FROM ALUMNI TO LEGACY"

21th May 2025 – Serdang Briefing Hall, UPM

PAUPM attended the Inspiration Forum "From Alumni to Legacy" held in conjunction with the 94th UPM Alumni Day. PAUPM President was invited as one of the panelists, alongside Tan Sri Datuk Seri (Dr.) Hj. Mazlan Lazim (President of PALAPES UPM Alumni), Datuk Sylvester Entri Muran (Chairman of PAUPM Sarawak), with Dr. Ahmad Fareed Ismail (Assistant Secretary of PAUPM) as moderator. The event was also attended by PAUPM Advisor Tuan Hj. Ghazali Salam, PAUPM EXCO LAr. Amos Ng Kheng Hooi, chapter representatives, alumni, staff, and students. Congratulations and Happy 94th UPM Alumni Day!



ALUMNI DAY GOLF TOURNAMENT

24th May 2025 – UniPutra Golf Club

PAUPM organized a golf tournament in conjunction with UPM Alumni Day at UniPutra Golf Club.

A total of 40 participants took part, with competitions across several categories. Congratulations to all winners!



NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY CONFERENCE 2025 – FORUM 1
10th June 2025 – Grand Hall, PKKSSAAS

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre highlighted the active involvement of UPM alumni in the national agri-food sector during Forum 1 of the National Food Security Conference 2025. Their presence reflected strong commitment and meaningful contributions toward strengthening Malaysia's food security agenda, while reinforcing UPM alumni's role as key drivers of national development.



YAYASAN PAK RASHID (YPR) SCHOLARSHIP INTERVIEW SESSION
13th June 2025 – ARCUPM

The Bachelor's Degree Scholarship Interview Session under Yayasan Pak Rashid (YPR) was successfully held at the Putra Heritage Tower Room, ARCUPM. A total of 10 first-year students were interviewed, with successful candidates to be awarded the YPR Scholarship. The session was attended by YPR Trustees Dato' Raihan Shariff, Dr. Ibrahim Hj. Mohamed, and Tan Sri Datuk Seri Dr. Hj. Mazlan Lazim, together with representatives from UPM management and the Alumni Relations Centre.



ALUMNI 1974 CONTRIBUTION FUND HANDOVER CEREMONY
17th June 2025 – Executive Room, UPM Chancellery Building

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre extends its heartfelt appreciation to the Class of 1974 alumni for their meaningful contribution through the establishment of the Sultan Idris Shah Endowment Fund (TESIS). This initiative reflects a strong spirit of giving back, responsibility, and enduring alumni legacy. Beyond financial support, the fund aims to empower UPM students through scholarships, welfare assistance, and excellence incentives. The continued annual contributions by UPM's pioneer alumni serve as an inspiring model of sustainable alumni engagement, with tangible outcomes including Convocation Gold Medals and student scholarships that positively transform lives.





STRATEGIC COLLABORATION MEETING WITH QSR BRANDS MALAYSIA

20th June 2025 – ARCUPM

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) hosted a strategic discussion with representatives from QSR Brands Malaysia to explore potential collaborations and joint initiatives involving UPM alumni. The meeting highlighted opportunities to support alumni development, student welfare, and high-impact programmes that benefit both the university community and industry. This engagement marks a positive step towards building a meaningful and long-term partnership between UPM and QSR Brands Malaysia.



MEETING ON DONOR NAME PLAQUE – PUTRA WARISAN BUDI TOWER

23th June 2025 – ARCUPM

The UPM Alumni Relations Centre held a meeting to discuss the design and placement of donor name plaques at the Putra Warisan Budi Tower, a symbolic landmark honouring alumni contributions. The session involved LAr. Mohd Nazri Saidon (UPM Alumni 2007), Dr. Mohd Fabian Hasna (UPM Alumni 2006), and representatives from the UPM Alumni Association. Discussions focused on thoughtful, sustainable landscape integration, reflecting UPM's commitment to recognising alumni support while preserving the university's heritage.



INTERNATIONAL PINEAPPLE INDUSTRY SEMINAR 2025 (SINAR2025)

27–29th June 2025 – Hotel Thistle, Johor Bahru

PAUPM, in collaboration with the Malaysian Pineapple Industry Board (LPNM), organized the International Pineapple Industry Seminar 2025 (SINAR2025) at Hotel Thistle, Johor Bahru. The seminar was officiated by YBhg. Datuk Arthur Joseph Kurup, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Security. The event was attended by about 400 participants including pineapple growers, government and private agencies, and UPM students. Thirteen (13) presenters delivered papers, including four (4) international speakers from Vietnam, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. A total of 20 posters were presented, along with 12 exhibition booths, enriching the seminar experience. The seminar was held in conjunction with the 2025 National Pineapple Day celebration at Angsana Mall, Johor Bahru.



UPM ALUMNI GATHERING WITH NATIONAL LEADERS

1st July 2025 – Putrajaya

The Universiti Putra Malaysia Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) paid a courtesy visit to YBhg. Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang, Minister of National Unity and a distinguished UPM alumnus. The visit aimed to strengthen alumni relations and explore potential areas of collaboration between the Ministry of National Unity and Universiti Putra Malaysia.



APPRECIATION TO YOUNG ALUMNI CLUSTER GROUP

9th July 2025 – L'apprenti UPM, Serdang

The Universiti Putra Malaysia Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) extends its appreciation to the Young Alumni Cluster Group for their meaningful contributions in supporting students and strengthening alumni engagement at Universiti Putra Malaysia.



CLOSING CEREMONY OF INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVES DAY UPM 2025

11th July 2025 – Sultan Abdul Samad Library, UPM

The Closing Ceremony of International Archives Day UPM 2025 was held at Universiti Putra Malaysia and graced by YBhg. Dato' Dr. Idris bin Abdol, former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs & Alumni)



VISIT TO GOLDEN NIRA RESOURCES

15th July 2025 – Klang, Selangor

PAUPM organized a visit to Golden Nira Resources in Klang, Selangor, led by Dato' Raihan Sharif, President of PAUPM, accompanied by his spouse, Datin Zuraidah Yaacob, Hj. Wan Ali W Ab Rahman (PAUPM Manager), Pn. Siti Rohani Mohamed, and Cik Siti Farhana Saludin. The delegation was warmly welcomed by Mr. Zulkarnain Wagiran, Founder of Golden Nira Resources. He provided an overview of the production process of coconut sugar and coconut nectar- the company's signature products- and showcased his coconut plantation, the primary source of their production. As a token of appreciation, Dato' President presented a souvenir to Mr. Zulkarnain for his kind hospitality. Notably, Mr. Zulkarnain will also be one of the speakers at the upcoming National Coconut Seminar 2025 (NCS2025), to be held on 13-14 August 2025 at the Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM..



UPM FOUNDATION STUDENTS' POETRY RECITAL COMPETITION 2025

19th July 2025 – Menara Putra, Warisan Budi UPM, Serdang

The UPM Foundation Students' Poetry Recital Competition 2025 showcased the creativity, talent, and literary appreciation of UPM Foundation students through performances based on Ke Sarang Cenderawasih. Selected recitals will be featured on UPM's official TikTok account, with the highest-viewed participant earning the opportunity to perform at the Alumni Poetry Night and receive a special prize.



UPM ALUMNI AGRICULTURE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP SHARING SESSION
5th August 2025 – Tanjung Karang

The programme brought together UPM alumni and local communities for a knowledge-sharing session on agriculture, landscaping, and entrepreneurship, featuring practical demonstrations on tree grafting by Tuan Haji Tajuddin Abdul Manap and financial management insights by Tuan Haji Mat Amin Jaafar. ARCUPM extends its appreciation to all participants and partners for making the session a success, with the hope that the knowledge shared will benefit both personal and community development



KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER SESSION, JEJAK ALUMNI MADANI
5th August 2025 – Tanjung Karang, Selangor

PAUPM was invited to participate in the Knowledge Transfer Session under the Jejak Alumni Madani program in Tanjung Karang, Selangor. In this session, PAUPM Committee Member, Tuan Haji Mat Amin Jaafar, Managing Director of Amco Niaga Sdn. Bhd. (UPM Alumni 1994 & 2022), delivered a briefing on financial management and business record-keeping. He shared his experience and practical guidance on organizing an efficient bookkeeping system that could open the participants' eyes to the importance of proper financial records for business growth. The sharing was not only informative but also engaging, presented in simple language and enriched with "real case" examples.



UPM ALUMNI DISCOURSE & COMMUNITY PODCAST CLOSING CEREMONY

6th August 2025 – Tanjung Karang

The session on "The Role and Challenges of Alumni" featured distinguished alumni Tuan Awaluddin Zakaria and Mr. Noor Mohamad Shakil Hameed, highlighting alumni contributions and inspiring attendees to remain active, relevant, and dedicated in serving both UPM and society. The programme concluded with the Official Closing Ceremony of the Knowledgeable and Dedicated Community Podcast, celebrating its recognition as Malaysia's Longest Live Community Podcast and marking a milestone in strengthening alumni engagement.





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ALUMNI POETRY NIGHT 2025

8th August 2025 – Menara Putra Warisan Budi

Alumni Poetry Night 2025 concluded with heartfelt performances of poetry and music, featuring distinguished alumni, emerging talents from ASPUTRA, and special guests Dato' Dr. Zurinah Hassan and Dato' Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah. The evening also raised over RM180,000 to support the Putra Heritage Clock Tower Project and other alumni initiatives, reflecting the enduring spirit of "With Knowledge We Serve."



ALUMNI NOSTALGIA NIGHT: ALUMNI POETRY EVENING

8th August 2025 – Menara Warisan Budi, UPM

PAUPM attended Malam Tautan Nostalgia Alumni (MATNA): Alumni Poetry Evening, held at Menara Warisan Budi, UPM from 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm. The event featured esteemed poets including National Laureate Dato' Dr. Zurinah Hassan (UPM Alumni Class of 2001), UPM Vice-Chancellor Dato' Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah, former PAUPM Exco member En. Nazri Noh, Alumni, staff and UPM students. The evening was further enlivened with a variety of food served by food trucks, generously sponsored by a group of alumni. Among the distinguished attendees were Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed (Secretary-General, PAUPM), Hj. Zainal Abidin Yahya (Treasurer), Dr. Ahmad Fareed Ismail (Assistant Secretary), Hj. Mat Amin Jaafar, Hj. Wan Ali W Ab Rahman (PAUPM Manager), and Mr. Muntasser Al-Anbagi (Head of International Alumni Chapter).

SEMARAK MERDEKA 2025

13th August 2025 – Serdang

In conjunction with Malaysia's National Day, the UPM Alumni Relations Centre organized Semarak Merdeka 2025 themed "Rundingan Kemerdekaan", highlighting how independence was achieved through diplomacy, tolerance, and mutual understanding. The programme engaged participants in thought-provoking discussions on respectful discourse and national unity, with special appreciation extended to UPM alumnus Mr. Husalshah Rizal Hussian for his support and feedback.





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NATIONAL COCONUT SEMINAR 2025 (NCS2025)

13th–14th August 2025 – Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM

PAUPM, in collaboration with Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), successfully organised the National Coconut Seminar 2025 (NCS2025) at the Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM. With the theme “Coconut Industry: The Way Forward”, the seminar was officiated by Mr. Jazman Azi Jamalludin, Secretary of the Food Security Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (KPKM). The main sponsor was Malaysian Kuwaiti Investment Co. Sdn. Bhd. (MKIC), represented by CEO En. Shahrin Mohd Ali. The two-day seminar attracted 150 participants from government agencies, private sectors, NGOs, public and private universities, UPM alumni, and students. The programme featured 13 presentations from various areas of the coconut industry, 12 exhibition booths, and 5 poster displays. Distinguished guests included Y.A.M. Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Jamallulail (Former PAUPM President), En. Hazrin Ismail (Director of FELDA), En. Shahrin Mohd Ali (CEO of MKIC), and Tn. Hj. Ghazali Salamat (PAUPM Advisor). The seminar was divided into 6 sessions, each with its own specific focus. On the day-two, a panel discussion was held that involved the government agency, industry player and entrepreneurs.



GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION – UPM CLASS OF 1975

20th August 2025 – TNCPi Building, Serdang

The UPM Class of 1975 celebrated its Golden Jubilee with meaningful morning and afternoon sessions, featuring nostalgic ceremonies, inspiring speeches, recognition awards, and symbolic baton handovers. The event also marked a historic contribution of RM101,975 to the TESIS Endowment Fund, reflecting the alumni's enduring legacy and commitment to future generations of UPM students.



PLANTATION COLLOQUIUM SERIES: “PRECISION PLANTATION MANAGEMENT FOR OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE”

26th & 27th August 2025 – Kajang, Selangor

In collaboration with Explore Training Centre, PAUPM held the Plantation Colloquium Series: “Precision Plantation Management for Operational Excellence” at Explore Academy of Plantation Management, Kajang. This was the second colloquium series for 2025, joined by 11 participants. The main facilitator was Dato' Dr. Mohamad Hashim Ahmad Tajudin. The series will continue until December 2025.



AN AFTERNOON WITH CHAPTER LEADERS

28th August 2025 – PAUPM Office Foyer & ARCUPM

PAUPM hosted An Afternoon with PAUPM Chapter Leaders, a hi-tea gathering at the PAUPM Office Foyer and UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM). The event was graced by Y.A.M. Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Jamalullail (Former PAUPM President), Tn. Hj. Ghazali Salamat (PAUPM Advisor), and Dr. Rohani Mohamed (Former ARCUPM Director). Nearly 60 alumni, including Chapter Leaders and representatives, attended the session. The main objective was to provide a platform for networking while also announcing the date of the upcoming PAUPM 54th Annual General Meeting (MAT2025). We look forward to seeing everyone again at MAT2025 on 27 September 2025 (Saturday).



COURTESY VISIT – PAUPM EXCO 2023-2025E”

2nd September 2025 – UPM Vice-Chancellor's Office, Serdang

The PAUPM Executive Council (2023-2025) paid a courtesy visit to the UPM Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs & Alumni) to strengthen ties, discuss ongoing and future alumni initiatives, and express gratitude for the university's support. The visit also marked the symbolic conclusion of the 2023-2025 EXCO term, reinforcing PAUPM's commitment to being a strategic partner in UPM's continued advancement.



ALUMNI INFORMATION SYSTEM (AIS) & ALUMNI RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT TRAINING

8th September 2025 – Serdang

ARCUPM conducted a training session to enhance staff skills in using the Alumni Information System (AIS) for systematic alumni data management and relationship tracking. The session, led by experienced officers Puan Nor Hayati Mohamad Darus and Puan Aida Fitri Peli, aimed to strengthen strategic alumni engagement and support a sustainable, competitive alumni ecosystem.





TRACE @ EDUCATION 2025 SERIES 1 ”
12th September 2025

ARCUPM participated in TRACE @ Education 2025 Series 1 to strengthen connections with UPM alumni in the field of education, setting up a booth to update alumni records via the Alumni Information System (AIS). The initiative successfully traced 54 alumni, highlighting the strong alumni-university bond and fostering opportunities for collaboration and contribution to education.



TRACE @ COUNSELOR 2025 SERIES 1 – NCOSYM25

19th September 2025 – Royal Park Hotel @ UNITEN, Bangi

ARCUPM participated in NCOSYM25 as part of TRACE @ Counselor 2025 Series 1, reconnecting and engaging UPM alumni in the counseling field while updating alumni records via the Alumni Information System (AIS). The initiative strengthened professional networks, fostered strategic collaborations, and showcased alumni contributions to the development of the counseling profession.



TRACE @ PUTRA 2025 SERIES 1

24th September 2025 – Farm Fresh@UPM, Serdang

ARCUPM organized TRACE @ PUTRA 2025 Series 1 to strengthen bonds among UPM alumni working on campus, foster professional networks, and explore strategic collaborations. The programme also highlighted alumni contributions through scholarships and shared experiences, inspiring further engagement and support for students and the university.



TRACE @ VETERINAR 2025 – MAVMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

27th September 2025 – Grand Millennium Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

ARCUPM participated in TRACE@Veterinar during the 35th MAVMA Annual Conference to reconnect with UPM alumni from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, successfully updating over 60 alumni records. The programme also celebrated alumni contributions to the veterinary field and strengthened strategic networks, reflecting the pride and enduring loyalty of UPM graduates.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS: “UPM ALUMNI: SENTIASA BERILMU BERBAKTI” BY UPM VICE-CHANCELLOR

27th September 2025 – Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM

In conjunction with the PAUM 54th Annual General Meeting, PAUM hosted a keynote address titled “UPM Alumni: Sentiasa Berilmu Berbakti” delivered by UPM Vice-Chancellor, YBhg. Dato' Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah. Nearly 150 attendees—including UPM alumni, staff, and students—joined the event. Distinguished guests included Prof. Datin Dr. Azlina Harun @ Kamaruddin (spouse of the Vice-Chancellor), YBhg. Dato' Raihan Sharif (PAUM President), YBhg. Prof. Dr. Arifin Abdu (DVC HEPA, UPM), Y.A.M. Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Jamalullail (Former PAUM President), Mr. Mohamad Sabrie Mohamad Salleh (UPM Board Member), Mr. Muhazam Mansor (Registrar, UPM), and Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar (Director, ARCUPM). In his keynote, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the “True North” agenda as UPM's guiding framework, emphasizing the role of alumni in contributing to the university, nation, and society. He reminded alumni of the iconic convocation phrase: “You are UPM Alumni and Ambassadors to the world”, urging them to always uphold this spirit. During the session, PAUM was honored to present a souvenir and confer Honorary Membership to the Vice-Chancellor in recognition of his unwavering support for PAUM.



54TH PAUPM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (MAT2025)
 27th September 2025 – Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM

PAUPM held its 54th Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Rashdan Baba Auditorium, UPM, with the attendance of 108 PAUPM members. The meeting agenda included the confirmation of the 2024 AGM minutes, the PAUPM Activity Report (1 July 2024–31 August 2025) presented by Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed (Secretary-General), the Financial Report for the year ending 31 December 2024 by Hj. Zainal Abidin Yahya (Treasurer), constitutional amendments and proposals presented by Dr. Rohani Ibrahim (Chairman, Constitution Committee), and the dissolution of the 2023–2025 Exco by YBhg. Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Mad Nasir Shamsuddin (Chairman, Election Committee). The AGM also saw the election of the new 2025–2027 PAUPM Committee, appointment of Internal Auditors, and the inaugural address of the newly elected President.



ORAL HISTORY PROJECT – PAK RASHID LEGACY”
 2nd October 2025 - Serdang

An oral history interview on the late Pak Rashid was conducted in collaboration with the Sultan Abdul Samad Library (PSAS), UPM, featuring his son, Tuan Haji Hassan Mohd Rashid, and his wife, Hajah Jamilah Muhammad Saleh. The session captured personal reflections on Pak Rashid's values, humility, and lifelong dedication to education, highlighting his belief in education as a means of community empowerment. This initiative preserves his legacy and serves as an inspiration for future generations, reaffirming the role of education pioneers in shaping UPM and Malaysian education.



MALAM KILAUAN MUTIARA FBMK
 4th OCTOBER 2025 – PKKSSAAS UPM

PAUPM, together with the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication (FBMK), UPM, hosted Malam Kilauan Mutiara FBMK at Pusat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah (PKSSAAS) to celebrate the Faculty's 30th Anniversary. The event, graced by YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, successfully reunited FBMK alumni with their alma mater.





MALAM KILAUAN MUTIARA FBMK – 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
4th October 2025 – Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang

Malam Kilauan Mutiara FBMK was held to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication (FBMK), graced by Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister and FBMK alumnus, YAB Dato' Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, together with UPM leadership and alumni representatives. During the event, he announced a RM200,000 contribution to enhance the FBMK student backdrop area, reflecting his strong commitment to his alma mater and the enduring bond between UPM and its alumni.



AN HOUR WITH UPM ALUMNI – MPP 2025

9th October 2025 – Dewan Besar, Pusat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, UPM

Held in conjunction with Minggu Perkasa Putra (MPP) 2025, the “An Hour with UPM Alumni” programme gathered over 3,600 new students for an inspiring sharing session with distinguished UPM alumni. Moderated by Mr. Mat Amin Jaafar, the session featured prominent alumni leaders who shared insights on career journeys, resilience, and the importance of giving back. The programme strengthened alumni–student connections, instilled pride, and reinforced the value of lifelong engagement with Universiti Putra Malaysia.



AN HOUR WITH ALUMNI SLOT (SEBA): ALUMNI UPM TERUS BERILMU BERBAKTI

9th October 2025 – PKKSSAAS UPM

PAUPM took part in the “An Hour with Alumni” (SEBA) session held during the Minggu Perkasa Putra (MPP) programme. The session, which also involved new UPM students, featured four alumnus who shared their inspiring life journeys from their student days to their current careers offering motivation and guidance to the incoming batch.



SESSION WITH THE NATION'S LEADER – MPP 2025/2026

10th October 2025 – Dewan Besar, Pusat Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, UPM

Held in conjunction with Minggu Perkasa Putra (MPP) 2025/2026, Universiti Putra Malaysia hosted a special session featuring YB Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang, Minister of National Unity and UPM alumnus (Faculty of Forestry, Class of 1983). Attended by over 3,700 new students, the session highlighted his journey as a UPM student and national leader, inspiring students to value knowledge, work diligently, and strive for excellence, while reaffirming the strong bond between UPM and its alumni.



ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT – LANGKAWI INTERNATIONAL 7'S
25th October 2025 – Langkawi

UPM alumni actively engaged in the Langkawi International 7's Tournament, supporting the UPM Serdang Angels Rugby Team as referees and team managers. ARCUPM's session fostered alumni connections, showcased leadership in sports, and celebrated the enduring spirit of "With Knowledge We Serve." Alumni involvement reflects pride, teamwork, and the vibrant legacy of UPM across generations.



SECOND MEETING OF THE ALUMNI NOSTALGIA NIGHT (MATNA) SERIES – KIJANG MAS ALUMNI NIGHT

3rd November 2025 – Serdang

The Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) successfully held the second planning meeting for the upcoming Kijang Mas Alumni Night. Chaired by Mr. Fahmi Azar Mistar, Director of ARCUPM, the session brought together alumni representatives, student affairs officers, and programme partners to coordinate planning, align responsibilities, and share ideas. The meeting highlights ARCUPM's commitment to fostering collaboration and delivering impactful alumni programme that reflect the spirit of With Knowledge We Serve.





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01

**KEMASKINI DATA &
PROFIL ALUMNI
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MALAYSIA**



02

**SERTAI & DAPATKAN
MAKLUMAT
PROGRAM AKTIVITI
TERKINI ARCUPM**



03

**KEMPEN SUMBANG
SEMULA ALUMNI**



**IMBAS KOD QR
UNTUK PENDAFTARAN**





MEET & GREET 1.0 PAUPM
5th NOVEMBER 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM organized a four-hour Meet & Greet 1.0 session (10.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.) at the PAUPM office. The event aimed to encourage alumni to visit the office, network, and share ideas or suggestions to strengthen PAUPM's role and initiatives. Nearly 50 alumni participated in the session.



MOU SIGNING CEREMONY: PAUPM AND EON BERHAD (PROTON)
5th November 2025 – TNCPI

PAUPM and EON Berhad had sign an MoU together in conjunction with Meet & Greet 1.0 PAUPM at lobby of TNCPI Building. This MoU were expected to bring a benefit for the alumni to purchase their newly cars from PROTON with several offers. Three model that undergo the MoU are Saga, Iriz and Persona.





ALUMNI CONTRIBUTION TO SULTAN ABDUL AZIZ SHAH HOSPITAL (HSAAS) FOR THE PATIENT WELFARE TRUST FUND
5th November 2025 – PAUPMI

PAUPM presented an alumni contribution to Hospital Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah (HSAAS) for the Patient Welfare Trust Fund. The contribution, in the form of mineral water supplies, was provided for sale, with 100% of the proceeds donated to the fund in support of patient welfare.



EON @ ALUMNI PUTRA PROGRAMME
5th November 2025 – Serdang

PAUPM partnered with EON Berhad to offer UPM alumni exclusive PROTON vehicle discounts, supporting recent graduates in starting their post-university journey. Mr. Hazwan Yahya, COO of EON and UPM alumnus (Class of 2001), emphasized this as a gesture of appreciation to his alma mater. The initiative strengthens ties between UPM, its alumni, and industry partners.



PUTRA WARISAN BUDI CLOCK TOWER INSTALLATION
7th November 2025 – Serdang

Installation of the Putra Warisan Budi Clock Tower is underway, marking a key milestone in this alumni-led project. Symbolizing unity and the UPM motto, "With Knowledge We Serve", the tower honors alumni contributions and dedication. Once completed, it will serve as a lasting campus landmark and a tribute to the enduring bond between UPM and its alumni.



KANWORK CHARITY HI-TEA

9th November 2025 – PKKSSAAS UPM

PAUPM, in collaboration with KanWork, organized the KanWork Charity Hi-Tea at the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Cultural and Arts Centre (PKKSSAAS), UPM. The event was graced by the presence of Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tengku Permaisuri Selangor, Tengku Permaisuri Hajah Norashikin as an Royal Patron of KanWork.



UPM ALUMNI CONTRIBUTION FOR JIWA PUTRA FLOOD RELIEF MISSION 2025

12th November 2025 – Serdang

PAUPM, together with ARCUPM, contributed essential supplies to PKPPUPM in support of the UPM Jiwa Putra Squad Flood Relief Mission 2025, strengthening preparedness ahead of the monsoon season. The initiative reflects UPM alumni's continued commitment to community service and humanitarian efforts.



MATNA SERIES 2: ALUMNI KIJANG MAS

15th November 2025 – Serdang

The Malam Tautan Nostalgia Alumni (MATNA) Series 2: Alumni Kijang Emas brought UPM alumni together at Menara Putra Warisan Budi, celebrating the rich heritage of Malaysian arts such as Dikir Barat and Wayang Kulit. Planned over several months, the programme not only highlighted cultural performances but also strengthened bonds between alumni, students, and the university. The event was attended by prominent alumni leaders spanning the Classes of 1978 to 2010, demonstrating the enduring connection and commitment of UPM graduates. The UPM Alumni Relations Centre extends its gratitude to all participants who contributed to the success of MATNA Series 2, making it a memorable celebration of nostalgia, culture, and community.





YAYASAN PAK RASHID SHORT-TERM RESEARCH GRANT INTERVIEW SESSION

24th November – Serdang

The Short-Term Research Grant Interview Session under Yayasan Pak Rashid was held at Menara Putra Warisan Budi, ARCUPM, involving four shortlisted candidates. The panel evaluated research objectives, methodologies, and potential impact, reflecting ARCUPM's continued commitment to supporting meaningful research and strengthening collaboration between alumni, researchers, and the university.



MEETING WITH THE 2025 ALUMNI GOLD MEDAL RECIPIENT

29th November 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM hosted a meeting with the 2025 Alumni Gold Medal recipient, Ms. Hidayatun Nufus binti Abd Gafor, a Bachelor of Communication (with Honours) graduate, who received the award during the 49th UPM Convocation Ceremony. The President of PAUPM presented her with a RM4,000 cash cheque, witnessed by her family. Also present was Dato' Seri DiRaja Syed Razlan Putra Jamallulail, former PAUPM President and founder of the Razlan Putra Gold Medal, who presented a RM4,000 cash cheque to fellow award recipient Ms. Nor Asfarina Isahyifiqa binti Isahhidun, a Bachelor of Education in Physical Education (with Honours) graduate.



49TH UPM CONVOCATION CELEBRATES 6,929 NEW GRADUATES

5th December 2025 – Serdang

Universiti Putra Malaysia's 49th Convocation Ceremony, held from 29 September to 5 December 2025, celebrated the graduation of 6,929 students across two sessions in Sarawak and Serdang. The ceremony marked another milestone in UPM's legacy of academic excellence and the continued growth of its alumni community. The convocation was complemented by the UPM Convocation Festival and Agriculture Expo 2025 (PESKON 2025) at Menara Putra Warisan Budi, featuring cultural performances and family-oriented activities. Together, these celebrations reflected UPM's commitment to excellence, community engagement, and inspiring graduates as they embark on their next chapter.

UPM ALUMNI LEGACY SEATS INTRODUCED AT 49TH CONVOCATION

5th December 2025 – Serdang

During the 49th Convocation Ceremony of Universiti Putra Malaysia (29 November–5 December 2025), UPM unveiled the Alumni Legacy Seats initiative, a special recognition for alumni who returned to campus as parents of graduating students. Selected alumni were provided with exclusive seating and personalised assistance throughout the ceremony. A total of 218 seats were allocated across all convocation sessions, symbolising the continuation of UPM’s academic heritage across generations. The initiative added a unique and heartfelt dimension to the convocation, highlighting the lasting connection between alumni families and their alma mater.



SYMBOLIC CONTRIBUTION HANDOVER FOR DAPUR MADANI ALUMNI @ KOSASS

17th December 2025 – Serdang

UPM, through the Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) and the UPM Alumni Association, held a symbolic handover for the Dapur Madani Alumni @ KOSASS Initiative, reinforcing support for student welfare. Contributions included RM10,000 in essential food supplies from Yayasan PEKEMA and RM20,000 in ready-to-eat meals from Chapter Yosh with MyFundAction, ensuring students have consistent access to nutritious meals. The ceremony also featured a “Meet & Greet” session with alumni to strengthen connections and foster a sense of community.

LAUNCHING GIMMICK OF DAPUR MADANI ALUMNI @KOSAS

17th December 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM, in collaboration with ARCUPM, officially launched Dapur Madani Alumni @KOSAS in conjunction with the Meet & Greet 2.0 PAUPM session at the PAUPM office. This programme is a strategic collaboration between PAUPM, ARCUPM, and KOSAS. Key contributors to this initiative include Yayasan PEKEMA, Faiza Sdn. Bhd. and Chapter YOSH in partnership with MyFundAction which aims to support students by providing access to nutritious meals on campus to support their learning needs.



MEET & GREET 2.0 PAUPM
17th December 2025 – PAUPM

PAUPM, in collaboration with the UPM Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM), organised the Meet & Greet 2.0 session at the PAUPM office. This second session was held to welcome alumni back to UPM, foster networking among attendees, and provide a platform for exchanging ideas and suggestions to further strengthen PAUPM. The event was enlivened by the participation of many new alumni, adding to the vibrant atmosphere.



ARCUPM ANNUAL REPORTING 2025 & STRATEGIC PLANNING 2026 WORKSHOP

22th December 2025 – Avillion Cameron Highlands

The Universiti Putra Malaysia Alumni Relations Centre (ARCUPM) successfully held its Annual Reporting 2025 and Strategic Planning 2026 Workshop, bringing together university management, alumni representatives, and students to review past achievements and plan strategic initiatives for the year ahead. The workshop provided a platform for inclusive discussions, idea-sharing, and constructive feedback across stakeholders, strengthening ARCUPM's role in driving alumni engagement, fostering collaboration, and ensuring the centre's programs and activities continue to resonate with the UPM community.



MEKAR 27: UPM ALUMNI INVITATIONAL FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

28th December 2025 – Serdang

MEKAR Series 27 successfully brought together UPM alumni from the Classes of 2000–2006 at the Sports Academy Stadium, UPM, through a spirited Alumni Invitational Football Championship. The programme rekindled alumni nostalgia while honouring four former UPM football coaches for their lasting contributions to university sports. The event also strengthened alumni engagement through on-site data updates, reinforcing the enduring bond between alumni and Universiti Putra Malaysia through sportsmanship and camaraderie.



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Serdang Sun welcomes contributions in the forms of article, feature stories, alumni news to ensure the content of the magazine is relevant and appealing to the readers. Photos must be in high resolution and submitted as jpeg file. All published articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, UPM alumni or the university, nor does the Editor take responsibility for errors on fact that may be expressed by the writers and we also have right to edit submissions of style and length.

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