

## MALAYSIA

Monday, September 01, 2008

# Spearheading a global knowledge economy

**M**alaysia has set itself a clear target: to achieve fully developed nation status by the year 2020. Against a background of three decades of phenomenal economic growth, this national mission lays out a number of objectives, most of which are centered on the creation of a knowledge-based economy. However, there is one area that is the undeniable crux of Malaysia's aspirations to increase global competitiveness, productivity and innovativeness: higher education.

In line with this vision, Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi has reminded Malaysians of the need "to develop the necessary first-class human capital, so that the country can be intellectually self-sufficient and be able to engage as equals the world over, especially in advancing new theories and solutions."

Accordingly, Malaysia has put higher education at the top of its priority list. As a result, tertiary education has become one of Malaysia's most dynamic growth sectors. With a significant injection of cash, energy, and talent, Malaysia's public universities are growing in student enrolment and distinguishing themselves globally in a number of research areas, particularly in emerging fields like biotechnology, life sciences, nanotechnology, and space sciences. Meanwhile, private universities, both foreign and local, are creating diversity, dynamism, and competition within the country's academic landscape.

Ultimately, Malaysian researchers and graduates are expected to be at the forefront of new technologies and to contribute towards the country's socioeconomic progress. "We hope that our people can acquire the knowledge and the necessary skills through our



Students entering the Perpustakaan Sultan Abdul Samad library at Universiti Putra Malaysia in central Peninsular Malaysia.



**MOHAMED KHALED  
NORDIN**

Minister of Higher  
Education

higher education system, and that this will contribute to the full development of Malaysia by the year 2020," says Mohamed Khaled Nordin, Minister of Higher Education.

A Higher Education Action Plan launched in August 2007 aims to widen access and enhance equity, improve the quality of teaching and learning, and boost research and innovation. The plan is intended to strengthen institutions of higher education, intensify internationalization, and make lifelong learning part of the national culture.

One of Malaysia's great successes so far has been the democratization of higher education. Ensuring broad access has made the country a model in equitable development. Capacity has grown from the formation of the first university, the University of Malaya, in 1961, to the current enrolment of approximately 950,000 students in 20 public universities, 32 private universities and university colleges, four

branch campuses of international universities, 24 polytechnics, 37 public community colleges, and 485 private colleges.

The government has established the National Higher Education Fund Corporation to provide low-cost educational loans to students in diploma and first-degree level programs at public and private higher education institutions. Since its inception in 1997, the fund has enabled hundreds of thousands of Malaysians to pursue their higher education studies.

The next—and greater—challenge is to provide 'world class' education. One of the main vehicles for this, and arguably the theme that dominates higher education in Malaysia today, is internationalization. Part of this process is international benchmarking. Malaysia's four designated research universities, the

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## Malaysia

Project directed and coordinated by:  
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## MALAYSIA

# The first university goes global

**Boasting an increasing array of international linkages, the University of Malaya is expanding the borders of Malaysian tertiary education**

**T**he oldest and most prestigious learning institution in Malaysia, the University of Malaya (UM) has produced some of the country's most influential figures over the years, including the current prime minister. Reflecting this, Rafiah Salim, UM's Vice Chancellor, has adopted the slogan 'Producing leaders since 1905'.

A former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resource Management at the United Nations, Rafiah became the first female Vice Chancellor in Malaysia when she took up her post in 2006. Since then she has breathed new life in-

to the university. She believes that UM, as one of Malaysia's four designated research universities, should be proud of its history, but has no intention of letting it rest on its laurels.

Her main priority is to establish UM's global profile, competing at the international level and attracting strong numbers of foreign students and high caliber academic staff. "It is insufficient for us now to be merely a local university, especially with Malaysia becoming increasingly liberalized. We want to be a global player," she says.

Rafiah believes that the internationalization of the university system is critical for increasing quality and competitiveness and enriching the learning experiences of the students. UM itself has raised



The University of Malaya's 750-acre campus is located in Kuala Lumpur.

its total of international students to more than 3,000 and significantly increased its number of international academicians.

She says the university has yet to tap fully into academic talent in the United States but is eager to do so. "We would love to get academicians from America, not just at the top level. I am also looking at young people as well who would consider taking their Masters degree or PhD at UM, because we have a lot to offer people who want to do their research here."

Additional steps to increase internationalization include establishing links with reputable foreign institutions in the UK and the rest of Europe, Australia, the Middle East, China, Japan, and the United States.

UM excels in a variety of research fields, through work carried out both on the campus and at the various research centers affiliated with the university. It hosts the World Health Organization Center for the Study of Infectious Tropical Diseases and is a leader in the biological, med-

ical and health sciences. Other areas of research range from chemical sciences and technology, and physical sciences and engineering, to information and communication technology and social sciences and humanities.

Marine research carried out at UM's Institute for Ocean and Earth Sciences is contributing to saving the endangered dugong, a large marine mammal, also known as the sea cow or sea pig. In the area of biotechnology, the Ulu Gombak Biodiversity Center, situated in a secondary and primary forest, has pioneered a number of landmark discoveries, including a banana tree plantlet that can produce a thousand seedlings.

Among products that the university is currently seeking to commercialize is a prize-winning building brick produced from waste material.

UM collaborates with a number of leading universities in the UK but, as yet, has few projects with U.S. universities, a situation Rafiah would like to change. "There is still a lot I want to do," she says.



**RAFIAH SALIM**  
Vice Chancellor of the  
University of Malaya

# UPM is bringing knowledge to the marketplace

With over 300 products up for commercialization, Universiti Putra Malaysia is gaining international recognition for its work in agrobiotechnology

**W**ith a main campus located within the Multimedia Super Corridor and a branch campus on the island of Borneo, Universiti Putra Malaysia is a pioneering research university.

From humble beginnings in 1971 as a purely agricultural-based university, UPM has expanded its frontiers in various disciplines, such as engineering, medical sciences, pure sciences, economics, management, education, languages, communications, and other fields. These complement the university's focal area, namely, agrobiolology, enabling UPM to play a vital role in the modernization of Malaysia's agriculture sector.

"Our approach uses ICT, science, engineering, and technology because we believe agriculture is a matter of science," says NIK Mustapha Abdullah, the Vice Chancellor.

One of Malaysia's four designated research universities, UPM has established an international reputation for agrobiotechnology and is recognized as a world leader in producing tropical agricultural products. Under the current five-year national development plan, the university is undertaking around 230 research projects worth \$8.6 million.

It has garnered seven international awards related to agrobiolology at exhibitions in Geneva, Germany, the UK, and the United States, and 34 awards at national R&D exhibitions. Foreign institutions with which it has estab-

lished links include Johns Hopkins in Baltimore.

UPM has been a pioneer in commercializing the results of its research. Approximately 50 percent of the products commercialized by the universities in Malaysia have come from UPM, which has used its expertise to add value to the agricultural sector and to develop emerging niche areas.

Drawing on experience gained in the U.S., Dr. Mustapha has established an Innovation and Commercialization Center that works closely with the university's Division of Research and Innovation. "People always talk of R&D," he says. "There is a missing link there: the C for commercialization. I just put in the C."

He argues that attitudes toward agriculture have to change. "It needs to be looked at differently. We have



**NIK MUSTAPHA  
ABDULLAH**  
Vice Chancellor of  
UPM

to educate, or re-educate people, so they understand that agriculture is a business. Let us move along the value chain: it is a business and opportunities are everywhere."

UPM itself has formed a number of smart partnerships with industry, including a deal with ST Biolife to commercialize a vaccine that protects goats and sheep against pneumonia.

The university currently has more than 100 products ready for commercialization and is negotiating with partners. Two of its biggest money-earning products are growth enhancers Zappa and Vitagrow, which have been sold to the Ministry of Agriculture.



From its inception 75 years ago, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has adhered to its founding principle: a down to earth approach.

Specializing in the fields of Agriculture, Forestry, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine, UPM has a strong dedication to research and development that has seen it patent 169 innovations and commercialize 13 products relating to these activities.

Evolving from an agricultural college to become one of Malaysia's premier research institutes with more than 25,000 students, UPM takes great pride in its steadfast and continuous advancement.

After all, at UPM, we believe education is a lifetime affair.

*With knowledge  
we serve*



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UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA  
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## MALAYSIA

# Engineering the future

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, the nation's premier engineering and technology center, is developing R&D as well as human capital for new frontiers

If demand for its graduates is a measure of a university's success, then Universiti Teknologi Malaysia has good reason for self-congratulation. According to Mohd Zulkifli Mohd Ghazali, the Vice Chancellor, up to 50 percent of the engineers employed by the government are alumni.



**MOHD ZULKIFLI MOHD  
GHAZALI**  
Vice Chancellor of UTM

UTM has climbed the ranks of the world's universities, making its debut on the top 500 list, according to the Times Higher Education Supplement-Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rank-

ings for 2007. In the recruiter review index, it scored 161, the highest of any university in the country. "It means that employers regard our graduates as the most employable," says the Vice Chancellor.

UTM has established itself as the nation's premier university in engineering and technology.

With its main campus in Johor, Malaysia's southernmost state, and another in Kuala Lumpur, it has been producing technical graduates and qualified professionals since gaining university status in 1975. In 1999, it won the Prime

Minister's Quality Award.

According to Dr. Zulkifli, human capital development is the university's primary goal, and it takes leading institutions like Harvard, MIT and Imperial College, London, as its benchmarks. "Our vision is to be a world-class center for academic and technological excellence through teaching and learning."

UTM's focus is on producing graduates in the various fields of engineering. Unlike other universities that have a single engineering faculty subdivided into different departments, UTM has developed a series of distinct faculties, dedicated to civil engineering, electrical

engineering, mechanical and petroleum engineering.

A multicultural institution with a strong base of international students and faculty members with broad international experience, UTM regards internationalization as a priority. Currently, it boasts 114

international contract professors and visiting professors, and plans have been recently announced to place more foreign professors in each faculty.

Links have been established with more than 50 international academic institutions, including Ohio State University and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the United States.

**"UTM aims to be a world-class center of academic and technological excellence"**

"UTM dedicates itself to superior instruction; to excellent student performance; to original research, creative endeavor and scholarly achievement; and to outstanding public service and economic development activities."  
*Mohd Zulkifli bin Mohd Ghazali, Vice Chancellor*

## UTM: Malaysia's premier engineering and technology university

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia is the oldest public engineering and technology university in Malaysia. Specializing in technical studies, the university also has faculties for education, pure sciences, management and human resources development.

UTM strives to be a world-class university with an international faculty, operating through a market-led and innovation-led ethos, excelling in R&D and commercializing its patented products.



www.utm.my

## MALAYSIA

# Steering industry and the nation towards new heights

**University Teknologi Malaysia has established a network of collaborative partnerships with businesses both large and small**

In addition to its reputation for teaching and learning, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia has established itself as a center for technological excellence, with a strong focus on leading-edge research and market-led innovation.

UTM possesses some 2,000 researchers and an annual research income of about \$25 million. Interdisciplinary research is promoted through its faculties, research centers, and institutes. Seven R&D clusters have been established, each focused on a specific area of research. These range from aerospace and transport technologies, chemicals and biotechnology, and electronics and ICT, to construction and infrastructure technologies, energy, advanced materials and manufacturing, and fundamental science and mathematics.

Participation in international R&D exhibitions and expositions, held in Brussels, Germany, London, Geneva, and Pittsburgh has helped UTM to win greater recognition internationally.

The university has been awarded 113 medals at international R&D exhibitions and 192 medals at national level. UTM's scientists and engineers have produced more than 100 patents, copyright, trademark and industrial designs.

Entrepreneurship is encouraged among faculty members. "Academics in Malaysian universities are allowed to practice, do consultancy and keep a portion of the money," says Mohd Zulkifli Mohd Ghazali, the Vice Chancellor. "We try to follow the American system. In Britain, academics are not allowed to do this but in the U.S., especially at Harvard, many are millionaires in their own right because they do something outside. We have quite a few here who have become millionaires."



UTM is spurring the fields of manufacturing technology and technological management.

The management philosophy favors flexibility. "We trust our academic facility and we empower them to achieve excellence," says Dr. Zulkifli. The premium that the university puts on innovation and entrepreneurship has resulted in a high level of commercialized products.

This requires careful management of intellectual property, and in 2006, UTM became the first university to be awarded the National Intellectual Property Award.

The university's right arm in promoting its various intellectual resources through a wide range of consulting, training, and testing services is its Bureau of Innovation and Consultancy, an

international standard business management center. Jalil Ali, the Dean of BIP, says, "One of the genuine traits of BIP's success has been our ability to turn opportunities and innovations into practical applications for the public good, derived from the commitment of strong teamwork and expertise of multidisciplines available in BIP and UTM."

A network of collaborative partnerships has been established with hundreds of businesses, ranging from small local companies to major multinationals. The university's technology transfer company, called Unitechnologies, was the first of its kind in the country.

UTM's Technovation Park has Multimedia Super Corridor status – a privileged position awarded by the government – and offers an attractive environment for high technology enterprise, being well equipped with support system R&D, pilot scale production, product development, and incubator programs.

The Vice Chancellor stresses the importance given to maintaining close links with industry. "It is something we are known for. Many experts from industry are on our advisory panels, and sometimes they give lectures to the students. In this way, we learn from each other. It is a win-win situation."

## Face of excellence in medicine

Established in 1992, the International Medical University is one of the country's leaders in medical education. A private university, it works closely with the Ministry of Health to develop its contribution toward Vision 2020 human capital development by producing health care professionals. "We are very proud that the university is a brand name synonymous with quality education in medicine and pharmacy," says IMU President Abu Bakar Suleiman.

Commitment to internationalization is evident in the university's impressive worldwide network of 27 partner medical schools in medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy. According to Dr. Abu Bakar, IMU is eager to develop its current links with North American universities and to raise its visibility so as to encourage further partnerships.

IMU continues to develop and win awards for its high standards. Recently, it opened its doors to its first intake of students for a range of new degree courses including pharmaceutical chemistry, nursing, medical biotechnology, nutrition and dietetics, psychology, and biomedical science. In July, it won the BrandLaureate Award 2007-2008 in the category of Private Education, Medicine and Pharmacy.

With its reputation growing both at home and abroad, IMU is actively developing its research capabilities, extending its post-graduate research masters and Ph.D programs and growing its core of international partner medical schools.

Recruitment of high-caliber staff is a priority. "To strengthen our position as one of the top universities in the country, we have to attract the best minds both in terms of students and faculty, as well as increase our efforts to enhance research."



**ABU BAKAR SULEIMAN**  
President of IMU

## MALAYSIA

# A pioneer in education for a sustainable future

**Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia's 'University in a Garden,' takes a holistic approach to tackling the biggest challenges of the new century**

Science and the arts are disciplines that all too often have little to do with each other, even when housed in the same university. Not so in Universiti Sains Malaysia, whose recently launched Science and Arts Innovation Space typifies an academic institution that has built its reputation on a uniquely holistic philosophy.

Science and business parks have become common with the rise of the knowledge economy, but USM's new facility is different in that it will provide space for scientists and arts practitioners to work together and with industry. The park, which aims to attract international collaboration, is intended to be a springboard for fast-track technology transfer, commercialization of technology, and a new generation of intellectual property.

"It will be an innovative space where people from arts, engineering and medicine can mingle," says USM's Vice Chancellor, Professor Dzulkipli Bin Abdul Razak. "Alongside the science and technology, we will develop a creative colony."



USM attempts to synergize with nature. Its close affinity between its function as an institution of higher learning and the natural garden setting kindles the spirit of education.

Influenced by traditional indigenous architecture, the park will reflect the core principles of respect for nature and sustainability that led to USM being known as the 'University in a Garden'.

"Our vision encapsulates the interrelationships between the roles and functions of an institution of higher learning located within a garden-like environment," says Prof. Dzulkipli.

Established as Malaysia's second university in 1969, USM has



**DZULKIFLI BIN ABDUL RAZAK**  
Vice Chancellor of USM

succeeded in developing an identity that clearly distinguishes it from its fellow academic institutions, adopting an innovative approach that departs significantly from the traditional faculty system.

In its place, it has a schools system that allows for a multidisciplinary approach with a degree of specialization in a chosen subject. Twelve of its 24 academic schools are applied science and technology-based, and it is one of Malaysia's four des-

ignated research universities.

As a science university ('sains' is Malay for science), USM puts emphasis on innovation towards sustainability, as exemplified by its Center for Education and Training on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CETREE). The university has been designated by the United Nations as a regional Center of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development.

Apart from encouraging academic excellence, USM gives high priority to instilling a sense of social responsibility in those who study there. "We want to educate our students not only from the academic point of view, but more importantly to be participants in making things better in our daily lives," says Prof. Dzulkipli.

He sees bringing together the arts and sciences as an important part of USM's holistic approach to education. "The push for science in Malaysia has been very dramatic, to the extent that the arts have been marginalized," he says.

"However, people studying science need to be acquainted with the basics of philosophy, literature, and religion, just as those in the arts must have basic knowledge of science. At the end of the day, knowledge requires convergence."

**The University in a Garden**

The University in a Garden conceptualizes the vision of having an institution of higher learning located within a garden-like environment. USM also has extensive links with universities across the world through academic and research cooperative programs and student exchange schemes.



**UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA**

www.usm.my

## MALAYSIA

# The home of innovation

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia is unique in its approach to teaching. With lectures conducted mainly in the national language, Bahasa Malaysia, the university combines technology and innovation with the preservation of Malaysian culture and language

**A**s the only Malaysian university with the word 'national' (kebangsaan) in its name, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, the National University of Malaysia, carries a special sense of responsibility.

"As a national university, we try to be different from other universities. We have to live up to national expectation," says Professor Sharifah Shahabudin, the Vice Chancellor.

This sense of national identity informs the university's approach to education across the board, from its ambition to be one of the best universities in the country to playing its part in social and economic development and serving the community. Lectures are given predominantly in Bahasa Malaysia.

Dr. Sharifah points out that "as one of Malaysia's four designated research universities, UKM's quest for knowledge should not only be for material and economic progress but to serve the country's social aspirations as a matter of duty. On

the economic side, we are looking at the commercialization of research for wealth creation.

"On the other hand, we see ourselves as having a cultural mission to put our resources and expertise at the service of the community, so that we are also partners in social change," she says.

"The other important aspect for us is contributing to nation building by developing our human resources."

The niche areas on which the university focuses its research range from sustainable regional development, renewable energy and climate change to health technology and exploring Malaysia's rich biodiversity for biotechnology development.

UKM's alignment with Malaysia's national vision is by no means inward-looking. "The most important niche is identity and the nation state in relation to globalization and multiculturalism," says Dr. Sharifah.

She also emphasizes the practical application of the work being done. "It's not just about research, it's about the people, culture, the

communities and helping them to develop. It's about creating jobs and economic opportunities, about making a difference to people's lives."

UKM's main campus is in Bangi, Selangor, about 20 miles south of Kuala Lumpur. The university has around 24,000 students, including postgraduates.

UKM aims to mold its students into responsible and capable citizens. Social responsibility and accountability, ethics and professionalism are an important part of the curriculum along with entrepreneurship and managerial skills, communication, problem solving, decision-making and leadership.

These values are instilled not just in the classroom or tutorials but through co-curricular activities in the residential colleges, the community and the workplace. Says Dr. Sharifah, "Learning has to be emotional, and through these activities, they will have real life experiences that they will remember after they leave this university."



**SHARIFAH SHAHABUDIN,**  
Vice Chancellor,  
Universiti Kebangsaan  
Malaysia

## Institute of the Malay World and Civilization

UKM'S Institute of the Malay World and Civilization (ATMA) is the only full-fledged academic research institute in Malaysia that concentrates solely on the study of one of the world's oldest and most complex cultures.

Research is the Institute's core activity, around which other activities are built and generated. The Institute provides a host of supporting facilities, both for fellows and postgraduate students. It has its own research library with special collections, complemented by the UKM library's Southeast Asia Collection, and other inhouse databases.

"First and foremost, it is about national identity: who we are, what is important to us as individuals and as a nation, and how we deal with innovation and further multiculturalism," says UKM Vice Chancellor Sharifah Shahabudin.

**INSPIRING FUTURES, NURTURING POSSIBILITIES**

The National University of Malaysia is committed to excelling in research, pioneering innovation and safeguarding the sovereignty of the Malay language.



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## MALAYSIA

# Priming the captains of industry

Since 1956, UiTM's globally relevant, rigorous and responsive curriculum has been instrumental in shaping the nation's industry leaders

Asked to account for the success of Universiti Teknologi MARA in producing business leaders, Vice Chancellor Ibrahim Abu Shah highlights the university's continuous efforts to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, recognized by professional bodies at home and abroad, and equips students with excellent communicative skills, particularly the ability to speak in English.

"Overall, we have been able to produce human capital with the required integrated personality traits,"

he says. "Our students are exceptional, not only academically, but also in terms of personality, commitment, attitude, inner strength and sense of duty."



**IBRAHIM ABU SHAH**  
Vice Chancellor  
of UiTM

UiTM offers a very broad range of disciplines, encompassing 25 faculties and more than 300 academic programs spread over science and technology, social science and humanities, and business management. The university is active in over 100 collaborations with institutions abroad.

One of the most remarkable tran-



UiTM constitutes an 'exceptional community' of 6,000 academics, scholars and researchers

sitions UiTM has undergone is its development from an institution focused primarily on teaching and learning to one that is now also recognized as an important force in the research arena.

Under Dr. Ibrahim's leadership, UiTM has established an Innovation, Research and Development Center and has won numerous international awards for intellectual property. Recently, it set up two re-

search institutes, the Institute of Biotechnology and the Science Institute with the intention of fostering greater efficiency and higher productivity in scientific research.

Dr. Ibrahim describes UiTM as an "exceptional community" of 6,000 academics, scholars and researchers. "We want our university to be different," he says "We see ourselves as innovative and entrepreneurial."

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA  
www.uitm.edu.my

Driving growth,  
shaping leaders

UiTM is a premier Malaysian university, renowned for its successful role in driving socioeconomic growth, fostering global competitiveness and grooming the nation's captains of industry. Today, we are fully focused on internationalization and we are leveraging our reputation of academic excellence as well as our connections abroad to achieve our goal of world-class status.

## MALAYSIA

# Teaching the teachers

**Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia's teacher training university, is the driving force behind the country's most vital growth sector—education**

A prime objective of the government's education policy is to see all classes in Malaysian schools taught by graduate teachers by 2010. As the nation's premier teacher training university, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris finds itself at the forefront of this campaign to upgrade the quality of the nation's classroom staff.

"We believe that every student is an asset. The first place to look after the citizens of our country is the school," says Aminah Ayob, UPSI's Vice Chancellor. She points out that approximately 21 percent of Malaysia's annual budget goes to education. "That's the largest

percentage for education provided by any nation."

At present, UPSI focuses on training teachers for the secondary schools and those who already have their diploma or certificate in teaching and want to further their studies, especially headmasters. In the future, it hopes to produce graduate teachers for primary schools as well.

Students at UPSI now benefit from an improved teacher education program and from supervised training in schools. Emphasis is also put on instilling strong moral and religious values. Professor Aminah says the aim is to produce "holistic teachers who un-

derstand their role when they go to school, and don't just teach the content." Students are encouraged to do a voluntary service while undertaking their courses so they are trained to be able to serve the community.

The Vice Chancellor also stresses the importance placed on ICT. Every course includes a certain number of hours of online learning to ensure that the students are in touch with technology.

The university focuses on research in all areas of education, including human development, lifelong learning, basic education and literacy, and special educa-

tion. The main areas of focus are early and special education, higher education, professional development and training, and quality teaching and learning.

Established in 1997, UPSI has

a history that dates back to 1922 when it was known as Sultan Idris Training College (SITC). Today, a major physical upgrade is under way.

The current campus is on an 80-acre site in Tanjong Malim on the border of Perak and Selangor. However, April saw the groundbreaking ceremony of the new

Sultan Azlan Shah campus, which is being built on 800 acres just a couple of miles away.



**AMINAH BINTI AYOB**  
Vice Chancellor  
of UPSI



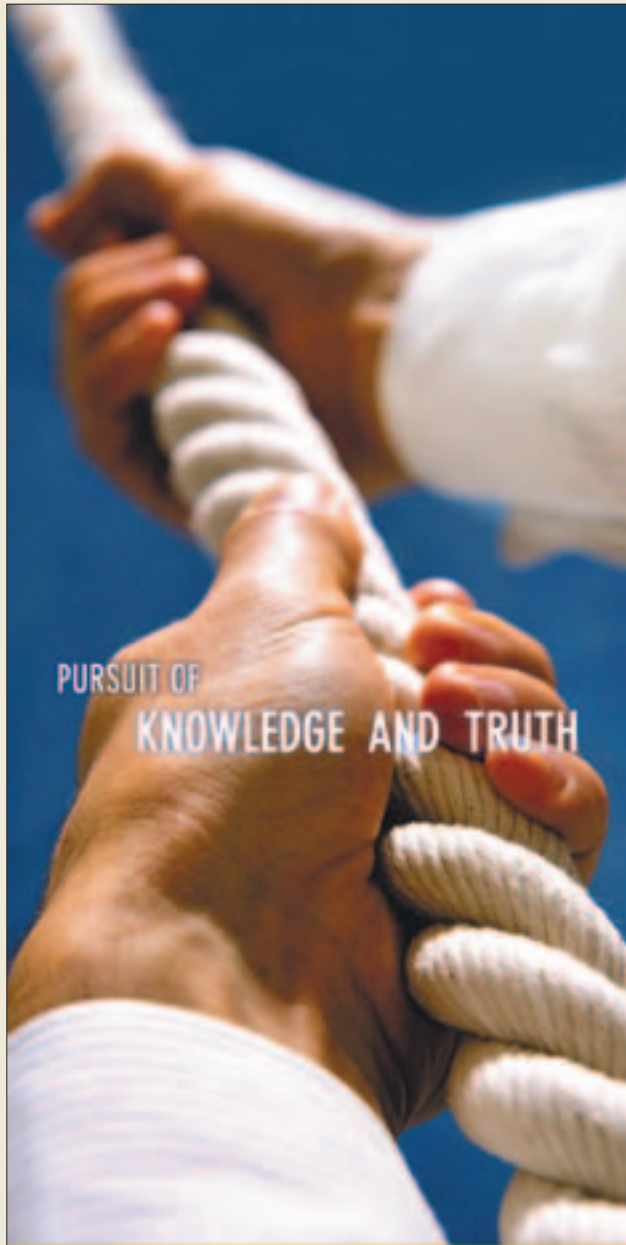
## MALAYSIA'S PREMIER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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*Garden of Knowledge and Virtue*

Truth is knowledge. IIUM, the 'Garden of Knowledge and Virtue', with close adherence to our holistic philosophy, with diligence and honest endeavors of dedicated community, is the center of educational excellence for generations to come.

[www.iium.edu.my](http://www.iium.edu.my)

# An international center of excellence

The International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) is gaining global academic distinction for its unique model of integrated education



IIUM seeks to integrate high quality education with Islamic values.

**F**ounded in 1983, the International Islamic University of Malaysia represents the realization of the Muslim community's desire to regain its leadership position within the areas of knowledge and education.

From its inception, IIUM has spared no effort to ensure that it provides the best tertiary education possible in all branches of knowledge, according to its Rector Syed Arabi Idid. "If you take out the Islamic aspect, we are like any other university," he says. "We are a comprehensive university; we do not limit ourselves to Islam. We concentrate, among other disciplines, on science, banking, economics, law, medicine, dentistry, and information technology."

IIUM uses a mode of integrated education, blending modern and professional disciplines with tradition values and moral virtues. It is remarkable in being the only Islamic university in the world, and the first public university in Malaysia, to use English as the medium of instruction in all its academic depart-

ments. It also has more than 300 foreign lecturers from over 50 countries, one of the highest percentages of international students in the world, and—unusually for an Islamic educational institution—more female students than male. The emphasis, says the Rector, is on moderation and optimism.



**SYED ARABI IDID**  
Rector of  
IIUM

IIUM made the shift from a teaching-based university to a research-based institution two years ago and now boasts 15 research clusters, ranging from electoral studies to biotechnology, pharmacy, and cyberspace security. Recently two institutes have been established: an Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization and an Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance.

IIUM maintains links with international institutions, such as the League of Islamic Universities, the International Association of Universities, and the Association of Commonwealth Universities, and is affiliated with several Malaysian-based businesses that provide opportunities for students to gain work experience.

## MALAYSIA

# Market-oriented and focused on industry

**Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia is answering the call for demand-driven technical and engineering experts and helping to link Malaysia with universities worldwide**

Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia started out in 1993 as the Center for Polytechnic Staff Training. Located in Johor, a southern state bordering Singapore, it continues to provide academic lecturers and teaching instructors for polytechnics, community colleges and technical schools, and other public and private technical institutions and training centers.

However, its mission is now much wider, and it also helps to meet the national demand for highly qualified professionals and technocrats by producing graduates in various disciplines of engineering and technology, as well as pur-

suing research in engineering, science and technology.

Awarded university-college status in 2000 and given full university status in 2006, when it acquired its present name, UTHM offers post-graduate, bachelor and diploma level courses in civil, mechanical, and electrical engineering, and in technical and vocational education, with specializations in 34 different areas.

The university is dedicated to offering a nationally relevant curriculum and producing "well-trained human resources and professionals who are catalysts for sustainable development", according to Vice Chancellor Ismail Bakar. "We are a very

focused university and our focus is on the industrial needs of the country," he says.

That means working closely with captains of industry—who make up the majority of its board members—to ensure that UTHM is providing what is required and that industry benefits from its assistance and expertise. "Our significant future challenge is how to get industry to place more emphasis on us," says Dr. Ismail.

UTHM plays a leading role in the Malaysian Polytechnic Development Project, in conjunction with the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities, in Columbus, Ohio,

which is aimed at upgrading the Malaysian polytechnic system through staff, facility, and curriculum development.

Internationalization is high on the

university's agenda. "We have connections and partnerships with universities all over the world," says Dr. Ismail.

"We become involved in benchmarking with universities from overseas by collaborating with them and sending our staff there. At the moment, we have approximately 800 academic staff at the university, and a quarter of those, close to 200, are doing their Masters overseas."



**ISMAIL BAKAR**  
Vice Chancellor  
of UTHM

## Foreign students welcome

A peaceful nation with a stable economic and political climate, Malaysia has many advantages with which to attract foreign students.

Eager to embrace internationalization, all the universities in this report cater to international students at both the graduate and undergraduate level and are also eager to take on foreign academics either fulltime, on sabbatical or in semi-retirement.

Many of the universities offer comprehensive summer program packages that are ideal for American students wishing to combine a May-term program with a summer adventure.

The country's rich natural heritage and biodiversity, geographic location and tropical climate, make it one of the best places in the world to study and

research fields such as biotechnology, marine biology, tropical diseases, and Southeast Asian studies. Many of the lecturers received their college degrees in the United States.

Malaysia itself offers an enriching life experience. A multicultural, multireligious democracy, where Islamic teachings are based on peace and respect for diversity, Living in Malaysia is inexpensive and getting about easy, with good housing, medical, and financial amenities, and first class international and domestic transport.

Fun things to do include diving, mountain climbing, and rain-forest trekking. For those who wish to travel, Malaysia is ideally located for convenient access to other parts of Southeast Asia.



## MALAYSIA

# Students, soldiers, leaders

**Universiti Pertahanan Nasional of Malaysia combines academic focus and military training with an emphasis on service to the nation**

The motto of Universiti Pertahanan Nasional, otherwise known as the National Defense University Malaysia, is 'Duty, Honor, Integrity', and those values are incorporated into the daily academic and military studies of those who study there. "The first notion that our students must understand is the idea of selfless service to the nation," says Ismail Samion, the Vice Chancellor.

The former Akademi Tentera Malaysia, or Malaysian Armed



**ISMAIL SAMION**  
Vice Chancellor of  
National Defense  
University Malaysia

Forces Academy, was upgraded to university status in 2006, becoming Malaysia's first university catering to the needs and development of the modern armed forces. It aims to be the premier regional defense university for education, training and knowledge creation—its mission: "To educate and inspire future leaders in the pursuit and attainment of scholarly excellence and military competence".

Lt. Gen. Ismail stresses that, just like other higher learning in-



UPNM combines academic excellence with the pursuit of military capabilities

stitutions in Malaysia, UPNM aims to produce graduates who are globally competitive. "Our University offers a unique learning environment; it is a military environment that combines both the best practices of academic and military training."

The academic staff is a combination of military personnel as well

as civilian experts in their respective fields. Eighty percent of the 1,300 students are military cadets, who on graduation and commission will serve in the Malaysian army, navy or air force. The remaining 20 percent are required to join the Reserved Officers Training Unit (ROTU) while pursuing their academic studies.

## Spearheading a global knowledge economy

*continued from page 1*

University of Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, and Universiti Putra Malaysia, along with its premier engineering and technology university, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, are all ranked among the top 500 in the most recent Times Higher Education Supplement-Quacquarelli Symonds (THES-QS) World University Rankings (for 2007).

Internationalization has also seen a global focus infused into curriculums across the board, a growth of international linkages—often with renowned U.S. institutions—and a rise in the number of international teaching staff and students.

"We believe that through internationalization, we can be recognized by other countries through the standard of our higher education system," says Khaled Nordin.

In terms of research and development activities, Malaysian universities enjoy an increasing number of Memorandums of Understanding with international universities. Malaysia is also steadily establishing its reputation as an international hub for education. The ministry aims to attract 100,000 international students to study in the country by 2010 and is running 60 promotional programs overseas this year. A Higher Education Promotion Council is being set up to recruit more international students.

In addition to the courses on offer in Malaysia—particularly in those disciplines that leverage on Malaysia's unparalleled ethnic and biological diversity—the country offers students and faculty members a high quality of living, low costs, a multicultural setting, and proximity to the treasures of South East Asia.

Inspiring leaders and getting involved.

At UPNM, the National Defense University of Malaysia, students learn to serve the nation through leadership, scholarly excellence and military competence.

**Duty, Honor, Integrity.**

[www.upnm.edu.my](http://www.upnm.edu.my)

## MALAYSIA

# Engineered for excellence

Plans to expand Universiti Malaysia Pahang reflect the increasing emphasis placed on engineering and technical studies as contributors to the country's future

Currently under construction 20 miles from the present site of Universiti Malaysia Pahang is a splendid new main campus that will have the capacity to cater to approximately twice the present number of students.

Phase One is scheduled for completion in 2009, and two engineering faculties—electrical and electronic, as well as mechanical engineering—are due to move in as soon as facilities are in place. The project as a whole is expected to be finished by 2015, when the 1,842-acre campus will have room for a total of 10,000 students and 2,000 staff.

Established in 2002 and known until last year as Kolej Universiti Kejuruteraan and Teknologi Malaysia, UMP is a competency-based technical university specializing in the fields of engineering and technology. "Our goal here is to ensure that the nation is provided with future talents in engineering and technical areas," says Daing Nasir Ibrahim, who

recently took over as Vice Chancellor. "We want our students to be the choice of the leading regional companies."

UMP currently operates from a 54-acre campus in the industrial estate of Gambang in the east coast state of Pahang, the largest state in Peninsular Malaysia with vast areas of rainforest and a wide range of biodiversity and natural resources.



**DAING NASIR IBRAHIM**  
Vice Chancellor of  
Universiti Malaysia  
Pahang

With a large number of multinational corporations in the chemical, petrochemical, manufacturing, automotive, and biotechnology industries located nearby, students are able to benefit from real world hands-on experience.

UMP specializes in chemical engineering, industrial biotechnology, and automotive engineering. Collaboration with industry includes links with the Malaysian national car maker Proton and the petrochemical companies located within the Gambang industrial area. The university is currently working with IBM to develop



UMP's focus is summed up by its motto: Engineering Creative Technology.

a new academic discipline in service science, management, and engineering (SSME). "Engineering, after all, is a service industry," says Dr. Daing.

According to the Vice Chancellor, the specialization process positions UMP among the country's top research institutions. "Our university focuses on applied research and industrial projects to enrich the teaching and learning processes," he explains. "It promotes the commercialization of the research products, thus giving our students exposure to the latest research and development activities in industry."

The university has announced that it is to open three new faculties—marine engineering, creative technology, and building engineering—as part of its drive to cater to between 7,000 and 8,000 students by 2010. This will bring the number of facul-

ties to 10 and the number of bachelor programs to 25.

The university's commitment to applied research and industrial projects has led to it being identified as one of the centers of excellence within the East Coast Economic Region (ECER), launched by Malaysia's Prime Minister, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, last year for bio-fuel and biodiesel. "We will spearhead research in those areas," asserts Dr. Daing.

He envisages UMP as the leading engineering school on the East Coast and among the best in the country and the region. "I think that we have all the talents, along with a good strategy and focus on what we want to do. I believe that we should not try to do what others are doing, but that we have to do new things and in new ways."

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## MALAYSIA

# Global influence, local impact

**Surrounded by the rich biological and cultural diversity of Borneo, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak leverages world-class research for local applications**

Location plays a large part in defining the strengths of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Surrounded by the extraordinary natural resources and socio-cultural diversity of the State of Sarawak on the island of Borneo, UNIMAS is able to offer a unique environment for teaching, learning and research.

Established in 1992, it was the first university to be initiated as part of the national Vision 2020. Today, it is an ISO-certified institution with a student population of almost 6,000. "Our aim is to become an excellent, comprehensive university," says Khairuddin Ab Hamid, the Vice Chancellor. "We

want to be good in teaching, as well as in research and providing services to the community."

The 'Borneo factor' has proved a powerful magnet for attracting world-class researchers. Unsurprisingly, there is a strong focus on biotechnological research in epidemiology, biogeography and agriculture, as well as biodiversity, natural resources, and environmental management.

Successful products of research at UNIMAS include a candidate vaccine for dengue developed by the university's Institute of Health and Community Medicine, in collaboration with the international company, Bavarian Nordic, and a

process to convert sago starch to lactic acid for the production of environmentally friendly plastic from the Faculty of Resource Science and Technology.

A third area of strength in research is ICT, specifically in rural communication and image analysis. UNIMAS's strong emphasis on technology won it Multimedia Super Corridor status in 2003, while awards to the university include the Information Technology Premier Award from the government, and the Bridging the Digital Divide category of AFACT's eAsia Award.

For setting up a telecenter to pro-



**KHAIRUDDIN AB HAMID**  
Vice Chancellor of  
Universiti Malaysia  
Sarawak

vide the remote community of Bario with communication, education, e-commerce, health and government services, UNIMAS was presented with the Industry Innovators Award for System Development and Application by the U.S.-based Society of Satellite Professionals International.

"We focus heavily on the importance of applying IT for community development," says Dr. Khairuddin. Indeed, assisting the community is regarded as a core objective. "Even if we are not within the top 100 world universities, we strive to give our best back to the community."

UNIMAS







## Take the plunge

Whatever you believe or aspire to be, your journey to self-discovery should be more than ordinary. Instead of a well-trodden, worn-out path, why not venture on a different route?

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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- 54 international partners worldwide
- State-of-the-art teaching & research facilities
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# study in malaysia

transforming your future

## Flourishing talents across the world



"The people here are friendly, the food and shopping is great, and it's near enough to Jakarta for me to go home."

Dora Puspita, 20  
Indonesia



"My parents helped me to choose Malaysia because it is affordable and we share similar cultures. I have also made friends from all over the world."

Sofa Saleh Salem, 19  
Yemen



"Malaysia has a better quality of education than a lot of other countries. It is very affordable and the degrees are internationally-recognised."

Steven Graham Murdoch, 19  
United Kingdom



"Malaysia is a wonderful place to study! It is such a beautiful country and I am impressed by the huge amount of study options and courses available."

Rafay Ahmed, 21  
Pakistan



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Jia Ling, 24  
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