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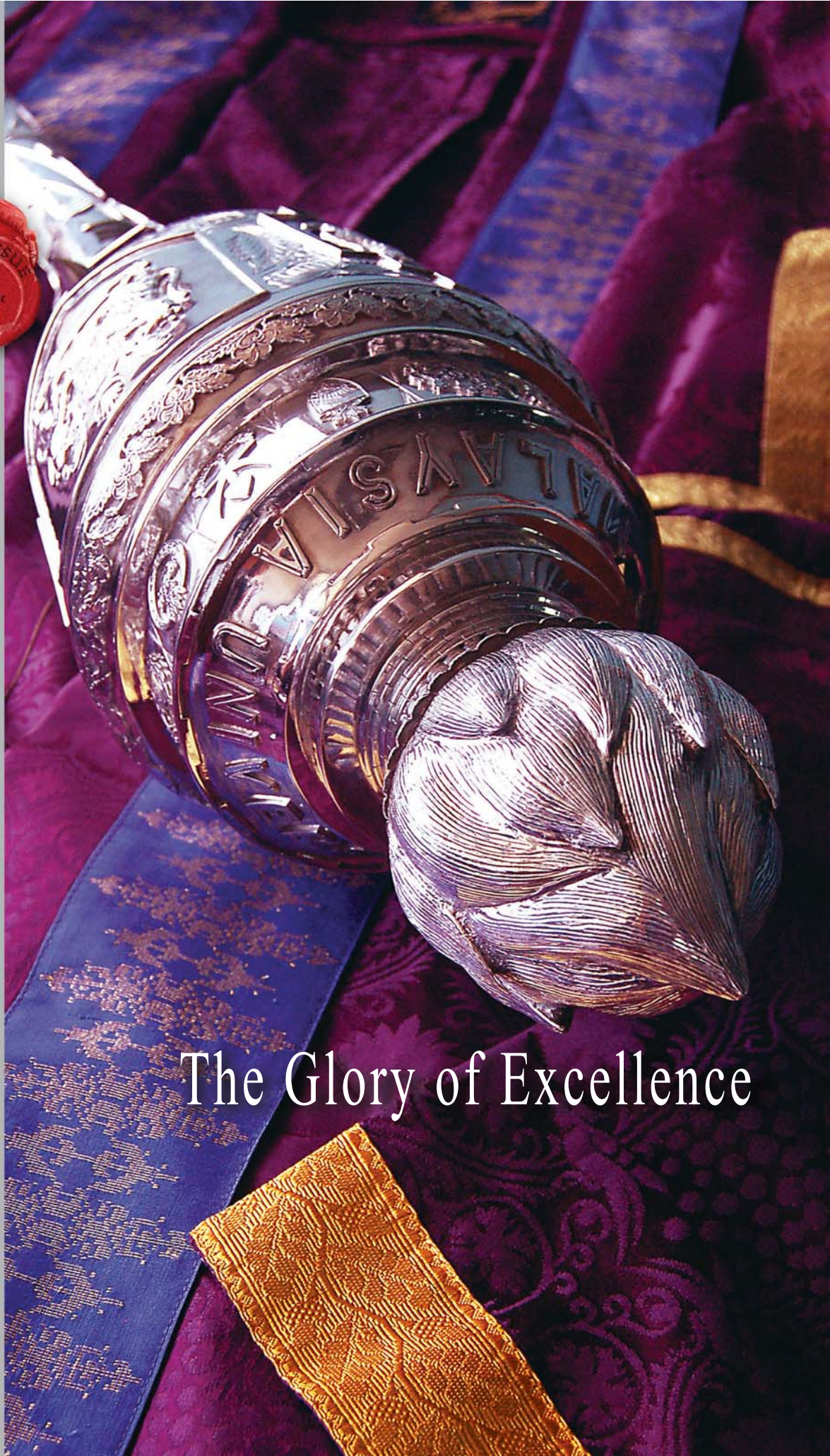
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The Leader



The Glory of Excellence

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From the Editor

Convocation ('convo' for short) is a momentous occasion for university graduates. No more assignments to hand in and no more exams to sit for.

It is a time to put on the robe and wait. The moment when the scroll is handed is probably the climax to the years of shuttling from one lecture theatre to another. That moment encapsulates all the paper created and the CDs burned.

Then comes the time to rejoice with families and friends. There will be an almost continuous stream of camera clicks to capture the nostalgic mood. It is also a time to immerse in the festive mood pervading the whole campus while other graduates wait for their turns to parade, reminisce and join in the merry-making.

The *Leader* would like to share this joyous and unique occasion by producing this special issue. This issue is especially intended for the graduating class of '07. It is also a dedication to the families and relatives who are no less instrumental in producing every graduate.

To the graduates, we hope that you will continue to keep USM in mind. Your student days may have come to an end but your alumni era has just begun. USM still wants you.

This issue is a reminder that graduates can still network and at the same time be kept informed of the university's development.

Join the *Persatuan Alumni*. Come back this December for *Balikampus*. Contribute to *The Leader*. In short, "keep in touch" by getting involved in alumni activities.

Good luck, and try to show that "We Lead" is more than a slogan.



The Editor



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Editor

1. Mohamed Talhah Idrus
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Assistant Editor

2. Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed
B. Soc. Sc. '74

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B.A. '73

5. Nor Rafizah Md Zain

7. Yong Check Yoon

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B. Comm '92

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10. Rusly Jamaludin

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From DSP To DTSP

Mohamed Talhah Idrus
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Raja of Perlis, the First Chancellor of Universiti Pulau Pinang arriving for the first convocation ceremony, held at the Dewan Sri Pinang (DSP) in 1972



Entrance to the Dewan Sri Pinang, situated about ten kilometers from the campus



Dewan Sri Pinang today

From DSP to DTSP



It was in 1979 that graduates received their scrolls at the Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra, ever since popularly referred to as DTSP



During the DSP years (above left), everything was done within the hall. By moving to DTSP, registration of graduates and last minute rehearsals are done in the adjoining buildings



There is even space for parades and inspection of the university's guards of honour

From DSP to DTSP



In the earlier years the **Cokmar** was carried by a USM administrator (above left). The honour of bearing it is now rotated among academicians



From a rented hall with low-tech facilities (above left), every session of the convo can now be watched virtually anywhere, including live telecast via the world wide web



One of the interesting features of the convocations is the diversity of robe designs worn by the invited guests from other universities

From DSP to DTSP



Even injuries do not prevent graduates from getting up on stage to receive their scrolls



Well-known personalities such as policy-makers and celebrities have donned USM robes and mortar boards



"**Pak Ya**" a.k.a. Zakaria Othman, a well-known local photographer who was commissioned to record the first convocation, would have been surprised to see the speed at which the photos are displayed during convocations these days

From DSP to DTSP



While the graduates receive their scrolls inside the hall, relatives and friends wait with bouquets and gifts outside, while others sample the food and entertain themselves with **pesta** (festival) offerings which have become a part of USM's convocations since the first one in 1972



With school over and the festive mood all around, it is no surprise that smiles are contagious during convocations



Mohamed Talhah Idrus is currently a lecturer at the School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM. He can be reached at tolamaha@yahoo.com



Photographs courtesy of Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia (PTPM), USM and Perpustakaan Hamzah Sendut.

Yunus and USM: *The birth of micro-credit system for the poor*

Sukor Kasim
B. Soc. Sc. '73

Yong Check Yoon

An interview with Professor Sukor Kasim, a lecturer at the Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA), USM. Sukor was a research fellow and an assistant for Professor David S. Gibbons, a professorial fellow at USM's Centre for Policy Research (CPR) at the time when USM replicated the Grameen (Bangladeshi word for 'village') Bank. The bank was the brainchild of Professor Muhamad Yunus from Bangladesh, India.



Professor Muhamad Yunus (left) and Professor Sukor Kasim at Grameen Dialogue, 1999 in Dacca, Bangladesh

Who is Prof Muhamad Yunus and how was he involved with USM?

The 2006 Nobel Peace Laureate Yunus has a long affiliation with USM, initially as a member of 'Project Ikhtiar's' Steering Committee (1986-87), a micro-credit project spawned by USM to elevate the livelihood of the poorest Malaysians.

Professor Muhamad Yunus

Yunus and USM: The Birth of Micro Credit System For The Poor

He was also a founding trustee of 'Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM)' (Sept. 17, 1987) until the AIM's Board amended the Trust Deed in 1996 that resulted in the exit of three founding trustees, Yunus, Gibbons, and myself.



Sukor and Gibbons during the recent interview in Penang

Since 1986, I have the rare opportunity to work with Yunus who has the gift of intellectual dynamism and the unselfish spirit of helping the poor.

Looking back to his initial loan to 42 poor women bamboo stool makers culminating in the establishment of the Grameen Bank, Yunus did not want to set up a bank for the poor. The fact that all banks refused to adopt his Grameen Bank Project resulted in him asking for a special decree to continue providing micro-credit for the poor from President (Hossain Mohammad) Ershad in late 80s.

How did the Grameen Bank project start?

Yunus and his group of students from the Department of Economics University of Chittagong was involved in an applied research project to help the poor living in villages around the campus. They tried numerous strategies but failed until they formulated the micro-credit system, their eureka.

Then what about the Malaysian micro-credit system?

Back at CPR in USM, we failed to initiate the applied research model as it has been seen as the prerogative

of the natural sciences despite working with an equally committed professor of development, Gibbons.

I was at the point of deserting my decade-old affiliation with CPR's Research Fellowship to return to full-time teaching at the School of Comparative Social Sciences in frustration with the failure of the research projects in helping the poor despite numerous recommendations.

"Intellectual poverty" was what Yunus describe our intellectual endeavor on the pre-applied research project. He explained that until you initiate it and show that it works to relevant institution, it won't make a big difference. That was how Grameen Bank originated.

How did Yunus and USM get together?

It was a historic meeting in 1985 between two professors - Yunus and Gibbons - in Comilla, Bangladesh, that we started our own applied research 'Project Ikhtiar' in 1986 to replicate the Grameen Bank strategies in overcoming rural poverty to complement national efforts towards poverty reduction.

How did Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia come about?

By September 1987 the project was institutionalized as a Registered Private Trust "Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia" or AIM. Although it was completely USM intellectual property replicating the successful Grameen Bank's methodology in establishing a banking system for the poor, particularly women, our USM-initiated project was eventually taken over by the Islamic Economic Development Foundation (YPEIM).

What transpired after the take-over?

AIM trustees replaced the three of us (Yunus, Gibbons and me) with their own nominees and Gibbons in 1994 and I went on to concentrate on our international capacity building through USM-initiated Credit and Saving for the Hardcore Poor - better known as CASHPOR - a network of Grameen Bank replicators in the Asia Pacific region. It was the result of a shift in CPR's effort in poverty-focused micro-finance to providing technical support to Micro Finance Institutions (MFI).

Yunus and USM: The Birth of Micro Credit System For The Poor

AIM was eventually burdened with Non Performing Loans (NPL) reaching 17% by the end of 2002, failing to reach out to the deserving poor, burdened with low staff productivity, and can generally be attributed to the Board of Trustees' ignorance about the dynamics of poverty-focused micro-finance.

In December 2002, USM was asked to take over and I was appointed as the third managing director in April the following year with the task of rehabilitation of the ailing government-controlled MFI, depoliticized the outreach, bring about professionalism in management and also to improve the impact of the programme for the clients as almost 40,000 of them has dropped out, disillusioned.

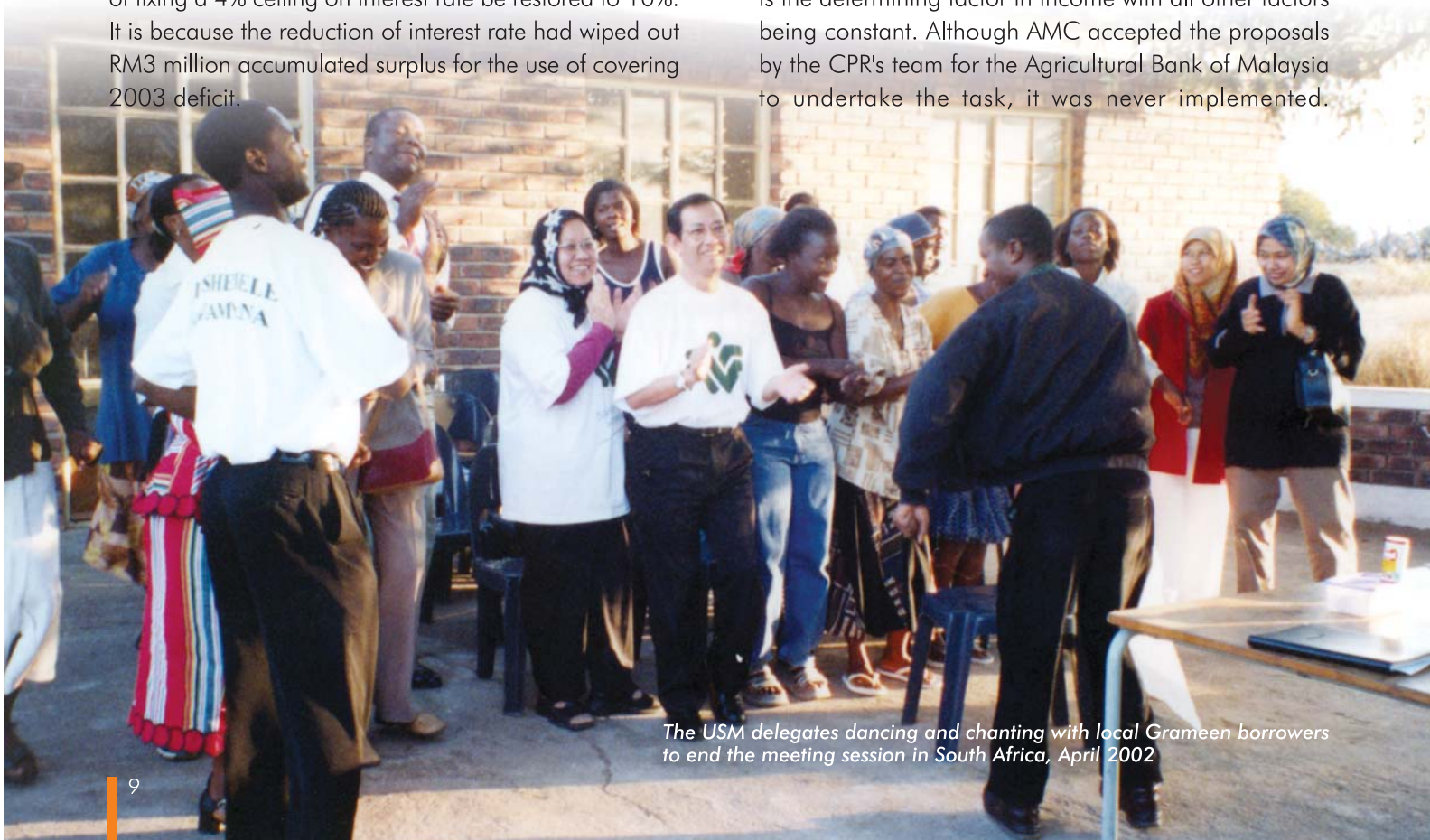
What were some of the measures taken to rectify the situation?

In May 2003, the government lifted a freeze on the RM200 million loan fund by Bank Negara during the problematic years. AIM requested Bank Negara's directive of fixing a 4% ceiling on interest rate be restored to 10%. It is because the reduction of interest rate had wiped out RM3 million accumulated surplus for the use of covering 2003 deficit.

What were the original intentions of 'Project Ikhtiar'?

USM's pioneering effort in replicating the Grameen Bank approach through 'Project *Ikhtiar*' to empower the poor with credit for self-employment to break out of their vicious cycle of grating poverty. Upon reflection, it represented a major breakthrough for the Centre for Policy Research in translating a major policy recommendation to government by implementing them as an applied research project, just as Yunus initiated in Chittagong University in 1976.

In the meantime, a study of the *Padi* Land Ownership and Operations (1974-78), commissioned by the Agricultural Modernisation Committee (AMC) of the Malaysian Economics Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department, was conducted by CPR which specifically gave two recommendations. They are that credit be made available to the very small '*pad'*' operators irrespective of their tenurial status and to the landless rice farm workers to increase their farm size. This is to raise their household income above the poverty-line as farm size is the determining factor in income with all other factors being constant. Although AMC accepted the proposals by the CPR's team for the Agricultural Bank of Malaysia to undertake the task, it was never implemented.



The USM delegates dancing and chanting with local Grameen borrowers to end the meeting session in South Africa, April 2002

Why should there be a bank specifically for the poor ?

In Malaysia, for over a decade (1976-86), the intellectual debate raged between the government and CPR over the bankability of the poor.

While we are struggling over the issue, across the Bay of Bengal, Yunus used his own money to provide credit to the poor and subsequently became a 'middleman' by borrowing money from the bank and then lending them to the poor!

Yunus and his students had tried numerous of banking systems before deciding on a village-based Grameen banking.

In 1984, Yunus received the Ramon Magsaysay Award from the government of the Philippines for his outstanding contribution in rural development but we in Malaysia were still involved in intellectual polemics on whether the poor should be given a loan since they could not provide a collateral which a key requirement in conventional banking principles.



The USM delegates attending one of the center meeting of Women Development Bank, a Grameen outfit in South Africa.

How did CPR proceed despite the resistance?

With Gibbons' first encounter with Yunus in 1985, USM third Vice-Chancellor Dato' Musa Mohamad (now Tan Sri Dato' Musa Mohamad) provided a strong support for our applied research project and even graciously accepted to be a founding member of the Steering Committee of Project *Ikhtiar* and later, a Founding Trustee of AIM. This facilitated Gibbons and myself a full-time secondment to 'Project *Ikhtiar*' (Jan. 1986 to Sept. 1987) and later to AIM (Oct. 1987 to Dec. 1993) as we struggled to troubleshoot replication problems.

Yunus acknowledged USM's being the first in replicating the Grameen banking and he provided support to nurture 'Project *Ikhtiar*', sitting in as a founding member of the Steering Committee (Jan. 1986) and later as a founding trustee of AIM (1987).

What problems did the team encounter during the replication of Grameen banking?

We have to translate all the Grameen forms and procedures from *Bengali* into English and it was a gargantuan task that is both costly in terms of time and money.

Visiting Grameen centres in villages across Bangladesh is equally memorable as we learn to understand the poor and the banking process suitable for them. However, it also gave us a false impression that the task is easy and that everyone can do it.



The Vice Chancellor signing the attendance book at a center meeting in South Africa.

Being a renowned academic with a flair for writing, Gibbons published the "Grameen Reader" in 1987 as a training manual on the Grameen methodology. Currently that book has been translated by the Grameen Trust into at least seven languages to promote Grameen banking to the poor.

What are the contributions of USM to the international replications of Grameen and MFIs?

USM through CPR acquired a strong tradition in poverty-related research and 'Project *Ikhtiar*', developed a cost-effective poverty index using the physical housing conditions as the first step in targeting the poor.

The first contribution was the poverty index methodology that has proven to be reliable in most of Asia, Latin America and Africa and have been adopted by Micro-credit Summit as a major targeting tool in reaching out to the poorest households.

The second major contribution of Project *Ikhtiar* is in the area of financial viability that Gibbons had pioneered whereby he demonstrated that reaching the poorest and reaching viability are compatible goals rather than a trade-off.

The third was the undertaking of the rehabilitation of USM's repayment crisis in 1987-88. Gibbons and I, in the process, acquired vital skills in undertaking preventive and corrective strategies in overcoming the threats to portfolio quality and financial viability.

The fourth was the development of an internal audit module in assisting MFIs to undertake such a vital task to instill corporate governance issues.



Vice Chancellor, Director of Health Campus (first from right) and Sukor posing with the Women Development Bank borrowers in South Africa.

The internal audit module developed by USM researchers incorporate the traditional audit variables but innovated into productivity, outreach, leakage checks facilitating poverty-focused MFIs in strengthening their corporate governance.

These four contributions have been built into CASHPOR-Grameen Trust Workshop Series undertaken since 1989 in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Iran, Yemen, Papua New Guinea and India.

Note: Currently USM is commissioned by a Washington-based Grameen Foundation of USA to undertake a major rehabilitation programme with the Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation in the Visayas region of Central Philippines in NPL reduction and expand their network of 39 branches with a target of reaching 200,000 families from the current 70,000 families.

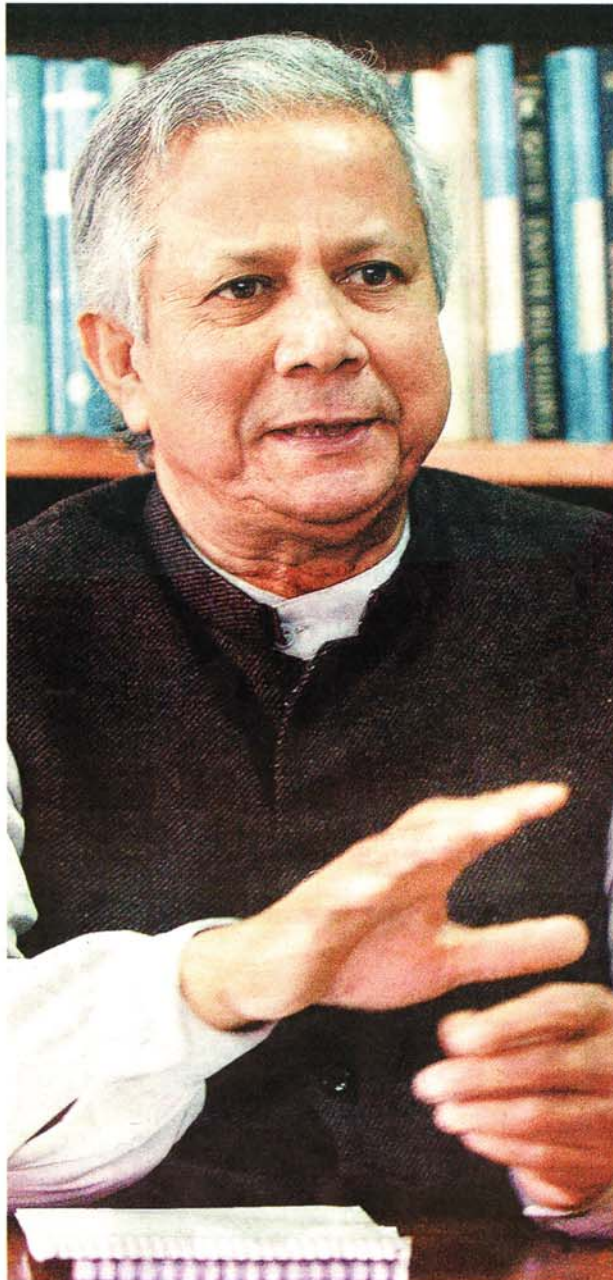


Sukor Kasim is currently a Research Fellow at Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA), USM. He can be reached at sukorkasim@gmail.com



Yong Check Yoon is currently the Editor/ASEAN Fellow 2005 of National Poison Centre, USM. He can be reached at cyong@notes.usm.my

Banking on the poor



Muhammad Yunus opened up a new world of finance for the very poor in Bangladesh who had no access to credit.

COMMENT

By Dzulkifli Abdul Razak

THE 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner must have every reason to be proud of his innovative achievement in developing a bank for the poor — the Grameen Bank.

Muhammad Yunus, in his acceptance speech delivered on Dec 10, in Oslo, described the prize as the highest honour and dignity accorded to the hundreds of millions of women all around the world who struggle every day to make a living and bring hope for a better life for their children.

It was a historic moment not only for them but for all those who work and feel for the poor everywhere.

Indeed, Malaysia was one of the first to recognise Yunus and his early work, through his association with Universiti Sains Malaysia.

It goes back to 1986 when Yunus was part of the steering committee for "Projek Ikhtiar", an applied research project based at the university.

The idea was to replicate the Grameen Bank approach in an attempt to complement Malaysia's efforts in poverty reduction in a sustainable manner.

Here, two names come to mind, namely D.S. Gibbons, a professorial fellow then at USM's Centre for Policy Research.

There was also his assistant, Sukor Kasim, a research fellow (now, a professor).

So successful was the project that in 1988 it was institutionalised as Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) and was registered as a private trust.

As a founding trustee of AIM, Yunus provided invaluable advice and technical support to the USM replicators to scale-up the poverty-focused micro-finance project in poverty-stricken states in the north and east coast of peninsular Malaysia.

USM, thus, became the first replicator of the Grameen Bank approach outside of Bangladesh and much of the experiences of Grameen Trust of that country were adapted for use in Malaysia.

Based on this partnership, soon enough, a network of Grameen Bank replicators was established in the Asia-Pacific region to provide technical support.

It marked a successful translation of a small academic research into a nationwide exercise for the benefit of the poor.

This was evident when banking facilities were gainfully extended to the poor, which in turn eliminated the

exploitative practices of the "moneylenders" and "middlemen".

At the same time, it created opportunities for the self-employment of the vast un-utilised and under-utilised human capital in the country.

Most importantly, perhaps, the programme allows the disadvantaged to be organised in such a way that they can understand and operate within it.

Additionally, they also find some socio-political and economic strength through mutual support, thus making the entire exercise sustainable.

At its height, AIM reportedly reached more than 50 per cent of its target group in peninsular Malaysia.

To date, the USM poverty-focused micro-credit effort remains unwavering, not only within the campus setting but also in many developing countries globally, in particular South Africa.

The added challenge, however, is to reach the poorest of households, and to design even more Islamic-based caring financial products that can address various poverty-related issues.

In this way, USM will continue to be committed in advancing micro-finance institutions, nationally and regionally, as well as eradicating poverty in general, in tandem with some of the main objectives under the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

In this context, the recent criminal breach of trust case involving RM3.8 million stood out like an ugly sore thumb.

As rightly pointed out by the Sessions Court judge, AIM was set up to help the poor. And like the borrowers of Grameen Bank, their lives could also have been transformed in the way described by Yunus.

Unfortunately, this was not

“
If I could make so many people so happy with such a tiny amount of money, why not do more of it? That is what I have been trying to do ever since.”

Muhammad Yunus

the case, because evidently in the later phases of AIM, a major rehabilitation exercise had to be launched to bring down the non-performing loans from 17 per cent to 5.6 per cent, and increasing outreach from 65,000 to 145,000 members by October 2005.

Apparently, the loan was no longer limited to the "poor" but also to those who were not deserving, which was in gross breach of the AIM principles as envisaged by the founding members, including Yunus himself.

To make matter worse, apparently those without the practical knowledge of poverty-focused micro-credit were allowed to manage AIM.

This resulted in serious repercussions with dropping productivity, escalating costs, unsustainable loan products, as well as deteriorating portfolio quality as NPLs became widespread.

Here, perhaps, is where we need to take a leaf from what the founder of Grameen Bank said when recalling his experience in helping 42 victims of moneylenders who had borrowed a total of US\$27 (RM94).

According to him: "I offered US\$27 from my own pocket to get these victims out of the clutches of those moneylenders."

"The excitement that was created among the people by this small action got me further involved in it."

"If I could make so many people so happy with such a tiny amount of money, why not do more of it?"

"That is what I have been trying to do ever since."

Though it sounded simple enough, many are oblivious of the impeccable integrity and passion that Yunus has in fighting for the poor and needy, even when told by the banks "that the poor were not credit worthy".

Now, he has changed all that, almost single-handedly.

Thirty years later, he noted, in a cumulative way, the bank had given out loans totalling about US\$6 billion; and the repayment rate is 99 per cent.

More importantly, according to a Grameen Bank's internal survey, "58 per cent of our borrowers have crossed the poverty line".

The bank routinely makes profit, too, proving the poor are also bankable!

So while we salute Yunus for his sheer dedication and heart-warming successes, we cannot but deplore those who have unashamedly abused the trust and privileges given to them by keeping the poor forever poor.

■ The writer is the vice-chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia. He can be contacted at vc@usm.my



Steinmetz delivering a speech during USM-UHP Colloquium at the University Conference Hall

Honorary Doctor of Science: Professor Pierre Steinmetz

Pierre Steinmetz is a Professor of Chemistry at the Henri Poincaré - Nancy 1 University, France. Being an expert in solid state chemistry, he is concurrently the Director of the Inorganic Solid State Chemistry Laboratory at UHP. Since 2005 he was also appointed as the Dean of the Faculty of Science and Technology. Other positions held prior to these include, Director of the Research Center for Physical Chemistry of Matter and Materials and Vice President (Research) UHP. It was during his tenure as the Vice President of Research that Professor Steinmetz played a pivotal role in establishing and supporting to this day, the collaboration between the Henri Poincaré -Nancy 1 University and Universiti Sains Malaysia, particularly with the School of Chemical Sciences, School of Biological Sciences and the School of Pharmacy. Through this partnership, we have seen numerous exchange of academic staff between the two universities as well as the transfer of technology through the co-supervision of postgraduate students.



Prof Pierre Steinmetz

Under Professor Steinmetz's leadership and initiative, the Co-Tutelle Programme was established whereby postgraduate students are jointly supervised by researchers from both universities and also benefit from the use of facilities at both universities. This programme has certainly benefited USM in its endeavor to train more

academic staff providing a cost-benefit alternative to the current mode of training. A number of jointly organised workshops and seminars have successfully been conducted under this collaboration, notably the workshop on Protein Crystallography and Structure Determination which resulted in the establishment of the Laboratory for Biocrystallography and Structural Bioinformatics at USM.

Professor Steinmetz was also instrumental in obtaining EU Scholarships for three USM graduates enrolled in the masters Programme in Advance Materials and Engineering. In line with the strong commitment of the Malaysian Government towards the Asean-EU Cooperation, Professor Steinmetz close association with USM is invaluable. As a chemist, his credentials are highly impressive as evident by the vast scientific publications, books and patents as well as the current and past positions held.

At 60, Professor Pierre Steinmetz is tireless in his pursuit of knowledge and will continue to commit himself to research in his field of expertise.



Zairi Jaal is currently a Coordinator at Vector Control Research Unit, USM. He can be reached at zairi@usm.my

David S. Gibbons - *A Braveheart Among The Poor*

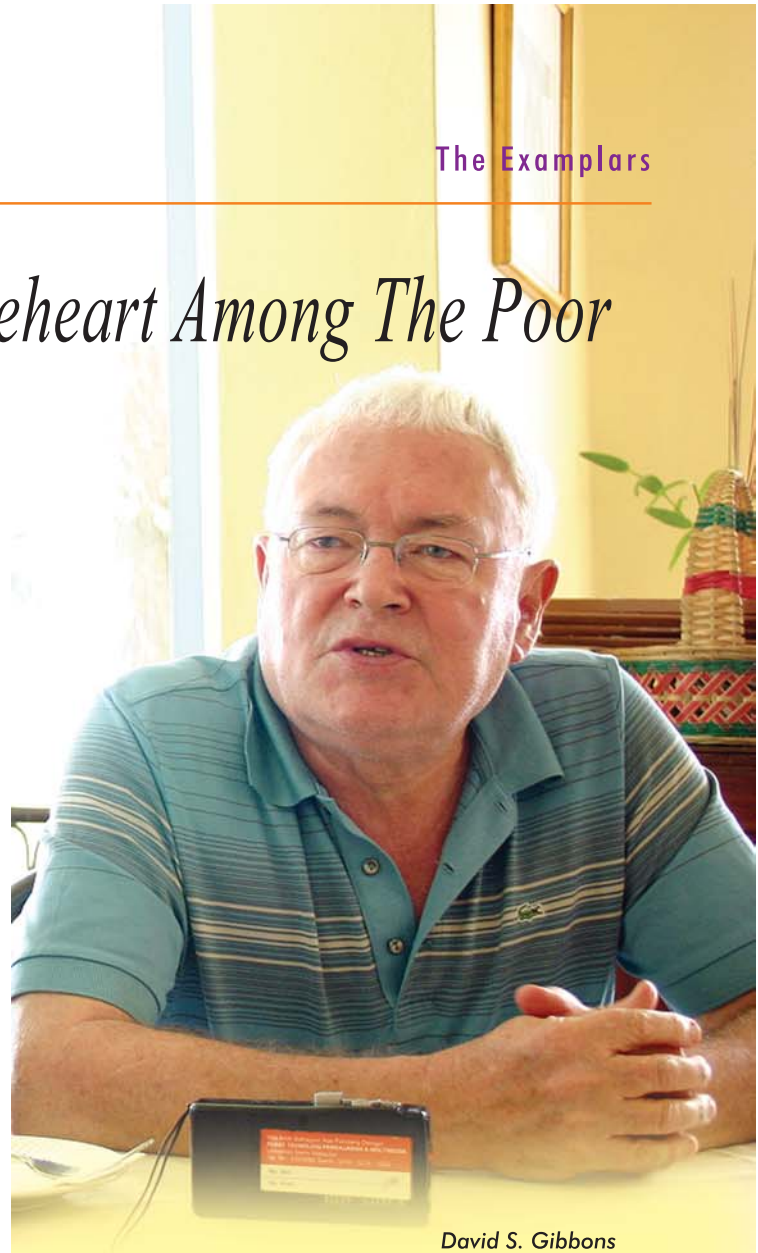
Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Under the aromatic pine trees of his favourite hotel, Dr. David Gibbons is surrounded by his wife, Halinah Todd; his two children and two grandchildren. He had flown in from India; Halinah from Timor Leste where she is managing a microcredit organisation and the children came from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. They chose Penang because the island held a special place in their heart.

A pioneering lecturer at the School of Comparative Social Sciences at *Universiti Pulau Pinang* in 1969, Gibbons left the National University of Singapore together with Dato' Professor K.J Ratnam, Professor Chandra Muzaffar and Professor Don Blake who joined them slightly later. He lectured in Development Administration and was well known among his students as a disciplined lecturer who tolerated "no nonsense".

When the Centre for Policy Research (CPR) was set up in 1973, Gibbons opted to join as a professorial fellow as he would like to embark in research which to him was a worthwhile and challenging task. As a professor at CPR, Gibbons focused on applied research an area considered new for a non-science discipline. One such research project was the land tenure study among small farmers and landless labourers in the MUDA area. From this project Gibbons found out that these farmers have ideas on what they could do to improve their income but they lacked capital. He thought it would be a good idea to provide these farmers with capital to enable them to get out of poverty.

According to Gibbons, while the land tenure study was being carried out in Malaysia, Professor Muhammad Yunus discovered the Grameen Bank a rural credit system to help the poorest of the poor in Bangladesh. A champion for the poor, Gibbons went to Bangladesh to meet Yunus in 1985 to study the possibility of setting up the same system in rural Malaysia.



David S. Gibbons

From this project Gibbons found that farmers have ideas on what they could do to improve their income but they lacked capital. He thought it would be a good idea to provide these farmers with capital to enable them to get out of poverty.

David S. Gibbons - A Braveheart Among The Poor

Gibbons together with Associate Professor Sukor Kasim (now Professor at Women Development Centre, USM) started 'Project Ikhtiar' at CPR in USM in 1985. The pilot project was started in Sungai Leman, Sekinchan, Selangor.

A year later, on 17th September 1987, a Registered Private Trust 'Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM)' came into being which is considered as one of the earliest replica of Grameen Bank outside Bangladesh. The Vice-Chancellor of USM then Dato' Musa Mohamad (now Tan Sri Dato' Musa Mohamad) gave full support to the program by facilitating the full secondment of Gibbons and Sukor to AIM.

Gibbons became the founding trustee and the first Managing Director of AIM while Sukor was the Director of Loans and later became the third Managing Director.

Professor Muhammad Yunus the Managing Director of Grameen Bank was appointed as one of the board members of AIM. According to Gibbons, Yunus's appointment in a way helped AIM keep some autonomy from the government.

He explained, "Not that the government is bad but you cannot mix government and microfinance because if you mix government and microfinance you cannot get repayment".

He however regretted that Yunus could not remained long as a board member because of his heavy commitments so AIM lose Yunus and lose its autonomy as well.

Gibbons is now actively managing Credit and Saving for the Hard Core Poor (CASHPOR), a network of Grameen Bank outfit of replicators in the Asia Pacific region, located in India.

"The need in India is much greater compared to Malaysia because it has the largest poor households in the world. Despite 57 years of independence, it has about 300

million poor people and about 50 million poor households. It is a real challenge to try to make a significant impact," said Gibbons.

According to Gibbons, the project was a success in India because the funding came from both local and foreign donors and there was no political interference.

When informed that Yunus would be awarded the Honorary Doctorate of Economics by USM in the coming convocation, Gibbons was

exuberant. He expressed delight that USM is honouring Yunus for his tremendous contributions. Gibbons was happy when Yunus received the Nobel Peace Prize late last year. He said, "We, of course, had been hoping he would get it. But after a few attempts and it didn't happen we almost gave up hope. But when he was finally awarded it was a kind of recognition for all of us".

He added, "The recognition will inspire us to dedicate

ourselves in trying to bring this opportunity to more and more poor households".

Gibbons retired from USM in July 1995 and made his permanent home in a 'durian dusun' (orchard) close to the 'Orang Asli' (aborigines) settlement in Seremban. Despite his hectic schedule in India he does have a retreat occasionally in his *dusun*.



Reading of *du'a* (supplication) during a briefing session.



Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed is currently the Manager of Alumni Liaison Office, USM. She can be reached at sharifah@notes.usm.my

Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut

Haslina Haroon

Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut was born on 9th March, 1927 in Kampung Air Mawang in Johol, Negeri Sembilan. Born to a farmer and rubber tapper, his early years were far from easy but this certainly did not deter him from pursuing an academic career.



Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut walking up the the steps to the Chancellory (now The Students Affairs Department) with the Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak in 1972

His impeccable academic credentials and glowing references did not go unnoticed - in April 1969, Hamzah was appointed by the 4th Yang Di Pertuan Agung, Almarhum Tuanku Ismail Nasiruddin Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Zainal Abidin as the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Penang, as USM was then known.

Charged with the responsibility of setting up and running the university, Hamzah Sendut did not follow conventional paths. When other universities elsewhere were still using the faculty system, Hamzah introduced

Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut

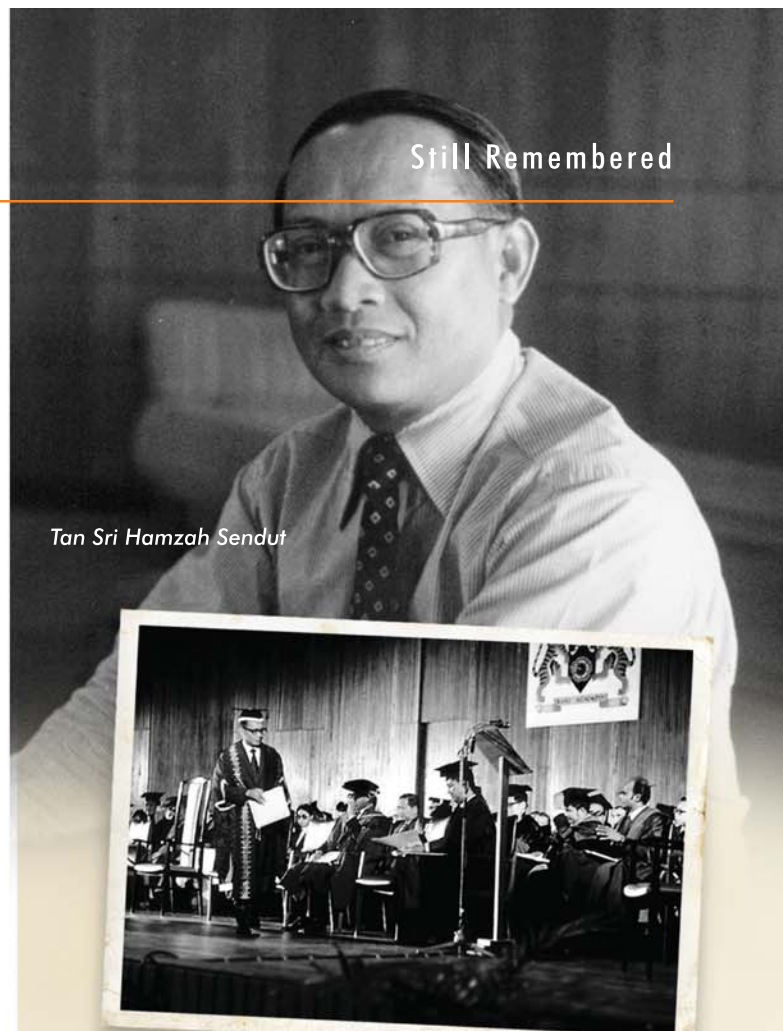
Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut

the credit unit system where each credit unit defines the quantum of contents or syllabus prescribed for a course and determined the number and type of instruction required. Under this system too, a multidisciplinary combination of courses is allowed, thus giving students the freedom to choose courses which suit their interests and needs.

Hamzah also gave special attention to the training of local lecturers so that in time, they would be able to take the place of foreign lecturers who were teaching at the university on a temporary basis. Under the program which involved the training of staff, USM was able to produce scholars and educators who then went on to serve the university, thus creating a tradition of excellence which has continued to this day.

Hamzah is often cited as the "human dynamo" behind the progress, development and achievement of USM, especially in the 1970's. In recognition of his contribution towards the development of Universiti Sains Malaysia in particular and of higher education in general, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow on April 5, 1975.

With the passing on of Hamzah in 1996 at the age of 69, the academic community lost a distinguished scholar and Malaysia lost one of its most illustrious sons. In view of his vast contribution to the university, the current Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak suggested naming the USM library after Hamzah as a way of honouring him. The ceremonial unveiling of the name of the library, held on 10th December 2004, was attended by top university officials and members of his family. The occasion was one of the highlights of the 35th anniversary celebrations of USM.



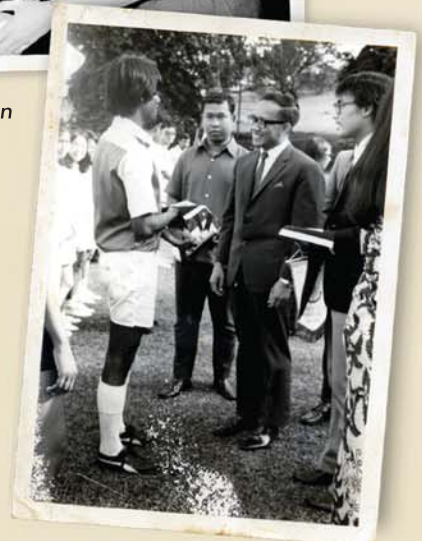
Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut



Hamzah walking to the rostrum during USM's first convocation in Dewan Sri Pinang in June 1972



Hamzah with a foreign guest in 1972



Hamzah meeting the captain; Sukor Kassim, during the opening ceremony of the National Association of Malaysian Students Sports Carnival in 1971



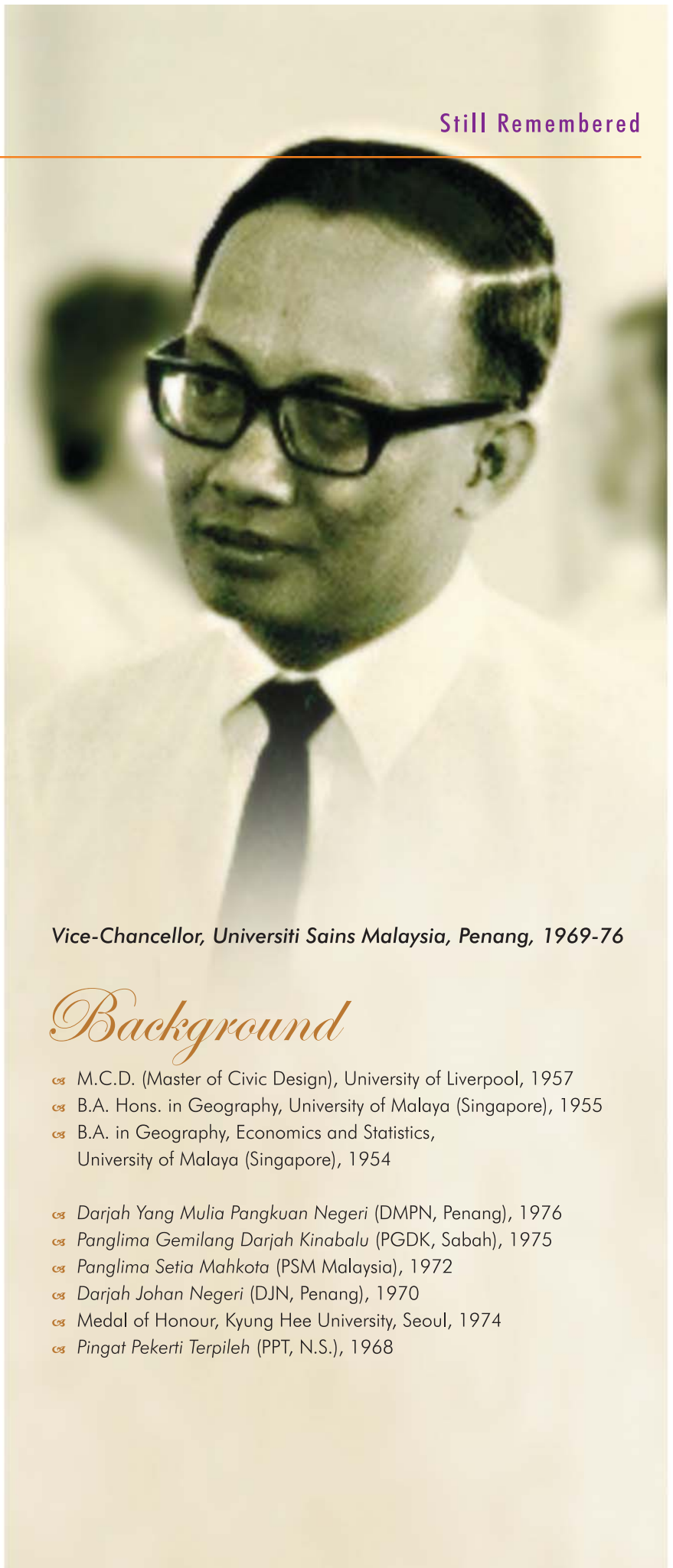
Hamzah Sendut Library

The naming of the USM library after Hamzah is indeed a fitting tribute to this great man. A university library essentially represents a commitment to the betterment of the campus community through the acquisition of knowledge, and it is appropriate that the library now bears the name of a man who not only was committed to the same cause but was also driven by the desire to work towards the betterment of the university as a whole.



Haslina Haroon is currently a lecturer at the School of Humanities, USM. She can be reached at haslina@usm.my

Photographs courtesy of Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia (PTPM), USM .



Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, 1969-76

Background

- ☞ M.C.D. (Master of Civic Design), University of Liverpool, 1957
- ☞ B.A. Hons. in Geography, University of Malaya (Singapore), 1955
- ☞ B.A. in Geography, Economics and Statistics, University of Malaya (Singapore), 1954
- ☞ Darjah Yang Mulia Pangkuan Negeri (DMPN, Penang), 1976
- ☞ Panglima Gemilang Darjah Kinabalu (PGDK, Sabah), 1975
- ☞ Panglima Setia Mahkota (PSM Malaysia), 1972
- ☞ Darjah Johan Negeri (DJN, Penang), 1970
- ☞ Medal of Honour, Kyung Hee University, Seoul, 1974
- ☞ Pingat Pekerti Terpilih (PPT, N.S.), 1968

Dato' Noel Alfred Ogle

- The Man Behind the Scene

Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Dato' Noel Alfred Ogle, the first registrar of USM, had orchestrated 19 convocations during his service with the university. Thus to most of USM community, USM convocation is synonymous with Ogle. According to Ogle, convocation is the most important day for the graduates.

"We must make sure it proceeds smoothly and correctly for the graduates and their parents to treasure that day," said Ogle. To him convocation is an activity where the university community, students and their families converge on the campus to celebrate their achievements.

Recalling his first convocation in 1972, he said, "It took the university 3 years to plan the first convocation but I was lucky because I was given the opportunity to attend convocations in other countries such as Hong Kong, the United Kingdom (UK), Australia and New Zealand but most of it we learn from Universiti Malaya." These visits have helped him acquire the knowledge of how to organize and run a convocation.

As a new university and preparing the first convocation, the Chancellor's chair has to be made and the robes

A young Dato' Ogle (first from left) helping the Chancellor to confer a degree on the late Tun Dr. Ismail in 1973



Dato' Noel Alfred Ogle

designed and tailored in UK using 'kain songket' as its borders. The Cokmar symbolising the authority of the Chancellor had to be carved by Mr. Ibrahim Ismail, a silversmith from Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The 1.4 meter long Cokmar is made from pure silver and weighs 14.5 kilogrammes. Carrying it would be like carrying two home office sized laser printers in your hands.



Dato' Noel Alfred Ogle - The Man Behind the Scene

The absence of announcements set the USM's convocation apart from other universities' convocation. According to Ogle, announcements made people bored.

Ogle explained that to make sure the ceremony goes without a hitch, there has to be many rehearsals for the graduates and the performing deans. He acknowledged that he is a stickler for protocols and so he made sure officers handling the ceremony rehearsed thoroughly and maintained discipline. One way to make sure everybody knew their tasks was the production of an Administrative Order of Proceedings (AOP) which is a 30-page document detailing step-by-step what a person-on-duty is suppose to do during the whole ceremony was prepared by the Registrar himself. Ogle felt proud the legacy he left behind and that the AOP is still being used.



Ogle giving a farewell speech during a dinner given for retiring staff members



Mr. and Mrs Ogle during the first convocation dinner of 1972

He also highlighted the designing of the academic scroll. According to Ogle, the then Vice-Chancellor Tan Sri Professor Hamzah Sendut has a hand in it. The scroll was very simple and the wordings short in line with the simplicity of the university's motto 'We Lead'. Ogle used to sign about 500 scrolls for each convocation in the early years and he had to use a special pen using Chinese ink. It took him 4-5 days to finish signing the scrolls. The Chancellor used to sign the scrolls for higher degrees.

Reflecting on the things that helped him run the convocation, Ogle noted that the university had the foresight of roping in the Educational Technology Unit which he said was a tremendous help to the whole ceremony. Above all, he attributed the success of the USM's convocation to 'esprit de corps' of the staff members'.

Photomontage by Rusly Jamaludin



*Ogle having a look at **The Leader***



Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed is currently the Manager of Alumni Liaison Office, USM. She can be reached at sharifah@notes.usm.my

Photographs courtesy of Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia (PTPM), USM .

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Waiting for the Shama

Mohamed Talhah Idrus
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Rusli Jamaludin



Main picture: The male shama is a splendid bird to behold and listen to.

Among the other campus residents, the avian group is especially beautiful. Catching sight of them, what more photographing them is challenging, enjoyable and sometimes even frustrating. But the rush one gets when a good shot is captured is difficult to frame in simple words. Even an imperfect photo of a particular bird in its natural surrounding can still evoke a lot of satisfaction.

Among these birds, the white-rumped shama is the most magnificent species that could be encountered anywhere in Malaysia. The realisation that it has been captured digitally on campus is almost surreal, considering the thousands of ringgit it is worth in pet shops. It is a shame that poachers are more aware of the existence of this *murai batu* (the Malay name by which it is popularly known by) than the usual campus residents.

Maybe that is the other reason that makes sighting and photographing it so refreshing and thrilling. Being in the same

environment where it appears is a real treat, an occasion when the watcher will usually be serenaded with fluid shrill songs by the male.

But there is also an uneasy tinge to these calls. Is the spectator listening to a sad ballad of a resident that is slowly being forced out of this campus through the destruction of its habitat and the uncontrolled poaching of the male (which brings home food for the nursing female and chicks)? How ironic; an unappreciated.

Waiting to photograph the shama is therefore more than waiting for it to appear, which it always does anyway. It is waiting for a change in the attitude of the usual residents. It is waiting for environmental education to take effect. It is waiting for "sustainability" to be meaningful. It is also waiting for the shama's colorful display. It is waiting for a happy tune.

Should USM adopt a campus bird, the shama should win.



Mohamed Talhah Idrus is currently a lecturer at the School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM. He can be reached at tolamaha@yahoo.com



Rusli Jamaludin is currently a lecturer at the School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM. He can be reached at rj_hbpsm@yahoo.com

The Pro-Chancellors

Mohamed Talhah Idrus
B. Soc. Sc. '74



Standing to the right of The Chancellor Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalulail is Pro-Chancellor Dato' Lim Huck Aik, a prominent lawyer, who served from 1972 to 1983. To the Chancellor's left is (then) Chief Justice Raja Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Yusof Izzuddin Ghafarullahu-Lahu Shah. Raja Azlan made a mark in history when he became the the first USM's Pro-Chancellor in 1971. He retired in 1984 when he became the Sultan of Perak in 1984



Pro-Chancellors Tan Sri Dato' Eusoffe Abdoolcader (right) was a High Court judge when he served the university from 1983 to 1994. Tan Sri Dato' Haji Mohamed Yaacob (left) who served from 1984 to 1994 was a former Malaysian Minister of Education



Both the former Chief Minister of Pulau Pinang Tun Dr. Lim Chong Eu (left) and former Finance Minister of Malaysia Tun Daim Zainuddin were Pro-Chancellors from 1994 to 1999

The Pro-Chancellors



Tun Dato' Haji Omar Yoke Lin Ong fulfilled his appointment as a Pro-Chancellor from 1999 to 2000 despite being confined to a wheelchair



Pro-Chancellor Raja Tun Mohar Raja Badiozaman who served from 1999 to 2001 is an economist



In 2000 Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Lin See-Yan succeeded Omar. He was a former Deputy Governor of Bank Negara



The latest to join the ranks is Tan Sri Razali Ismail, a respected diplomat. He succeeded Raja Tun Mohar in 2001 and will still be conferring degrees this convocation



Mohamed Talhah Idrus is currently a lecturer at the School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM. He can be reached at tolamaha@yahoo.com

Photographs courtesy of Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia (PTPM), USM .

Mohamed Talhah Idrus
B. Soc. Sc. '74

The Vice- Chancellors



**Y. Bhg. Tan Sri Datuk Professor
Hamzah Sendut : 1969-1976**



**Y. Bhg. Tun Hamdan Sheik Tahir :
1976-1982**



**Y. Bhg. Tan Sri Dato'
Musa Mohamad :
1982-1995**



**Y. Bhg. Dato' Professor Ishak Tambi Kechik :
1995-2000**



**Y. Bhg. Professor Dato'
Dzulkifli Abdul Razak :
commencing 2000**

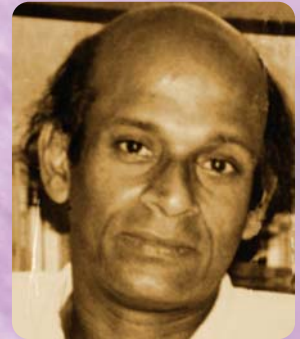
List of Professors Emeritus: 1993-2006

Dato' Professor Emeritus K.J. Ratnam

He was conferred Professor Emeritus in 1993
He retired from USM in December 2005 as a holder of
Tuanku Chancellor's Chair, Sciences and Technology
Policy and Development

Address:

5-1-B, Menara Bangsar, 297, Jalan Ma'arof,
59100 Kuala Lumpur.



Professor Emeritus Tan Wang Seng

He was conferred Professor Emeritus in 1993
He retired from USM on 3 Dec 1990 and now
lecturing at Kolej Wawasan, Penang.

Address:

1-P, Jalan Delima, 11700 Island Glades,
Pulau Pinang.



Dato' Professor Emeritus Shahnnon Ahmad

He was conferred Professor Emeritus in 1994
He retired from USM on 13 January 1998
and still writing books.

Address:

61, Minden Heights, Jalan 1,
11700 Gelugor,
Pulau Pinang.



Professor Emeritus Abdullah Hassan

He was conferred Professor Emeritus in 2006
He retired from USM on 20 March 1997 and is now at
Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris (UPSI) as Professor of Malay
Language and Communication.

Address:

536F, Jalan Pемancar, 11700, Pulau Pinang.



List of Professors Emeritus: 2007

Academician Tan Sri Datuk Dr. Augustine Ong Soon Hock
Retired from USM in 1991, he is currently a board member of professional bodies as well as corporate organisations.



Dato' Professor Siti Zuraina Abdul Majid
Currently she is a High Commissioner in the Department of Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, Malaysia and a Visiting Professor in the Centre for Archaeological Research Malaysia, USM.

Address:
Department of Heritage,
Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage
Tingkat 16, Menara TH Perdana,
1001 Jalan Sultan Ismail, 50694 Kuala Lumpur



Dato' Paduka Professor Mustaffa Embong
Currently he is attached to the Department of Medicine, School of Medical Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Address:
Lot 369, Kampung Guchil, Off Jalan Bayam, 15200 Kota Bharu, Kelantan.



Professor Dato' Amir Awang
Retired from USM in 1997, he is now attached to Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM).

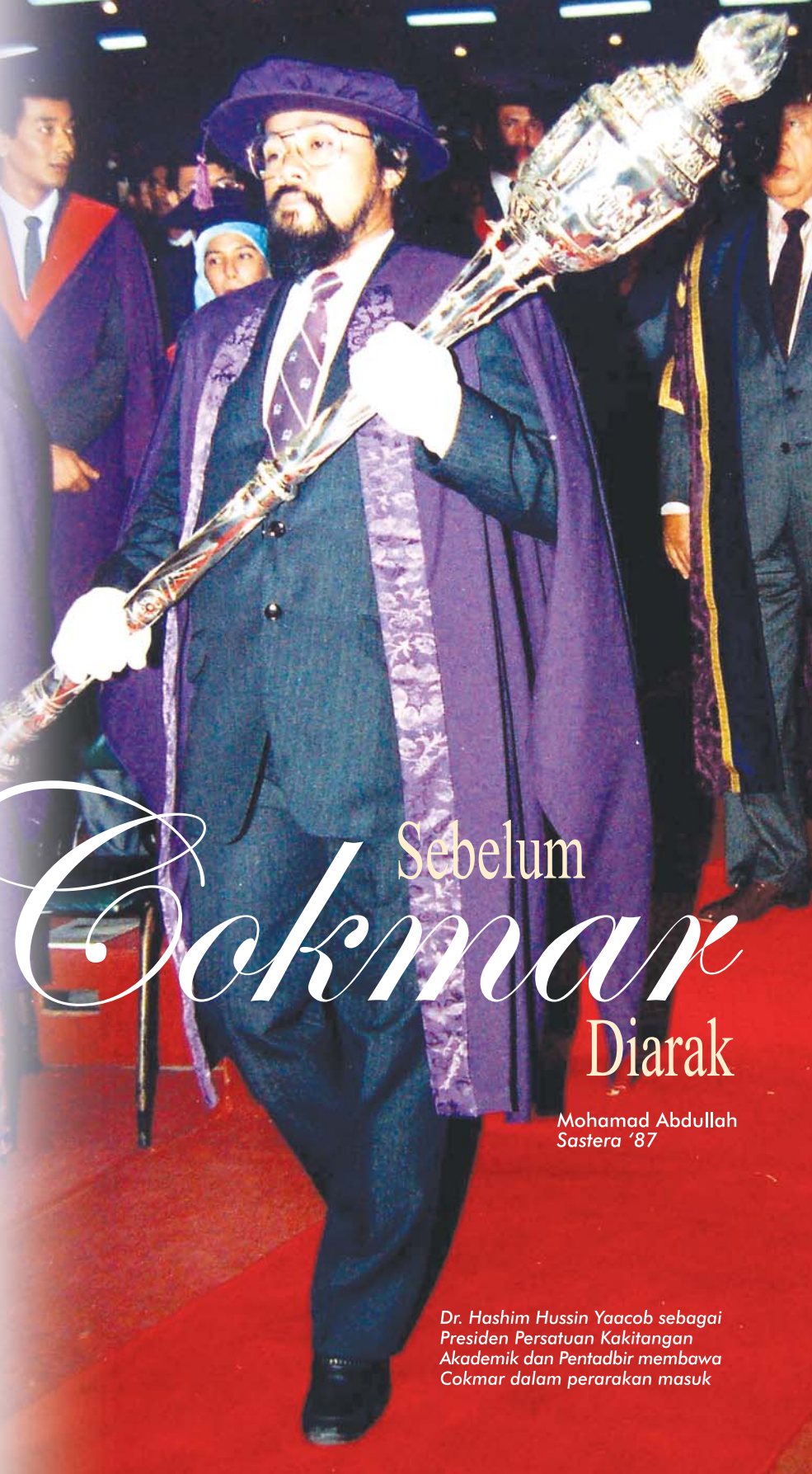


Menyelenggarakan majlis konvokesyen melibatkan kerjasama erat dan jitu daripada pelbagai pihak dalam kampus. Persiapan bermula di awal tahun. Urusetia menetapkan tarikh untuk dibawa ke Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Pemandu yang dipengerusikan oleh Naib Canselor.

Jawatankuasa Pemandu melibatkan Pengerusi-pengerusi Jawatankuasa Penyelarasan, wakil Persatuan Staf Akademik dan Pentadbiran, wakil Kesatuan Staf Am, wakil Majlis Perwakilan Pelajar serta wakil-wakil yang dilantik khas oleh Universiti.

Seterusnya, Jawatankuasa Kerja yang dipengerusikan oleh Pendaftar dibentuk. Ahli-ahlinya adalah pegawai-pegawai pentadbiran serta pengerusi Jawatankuasa Majlis Santapan Malam dan ahli-ahli yang dijemput khas. Jawatankuasa Kerja bertanggungjawab menyelenggarakan tugas-tugas Urusetia Graduan, menyambut tetamu graduan, menyambut tetamu kenamaan, mengawasi keselamatan dan lalu lintas, persiapan fizikal, persiapan jamuan untuk kenamaan dan para petugas, siaraya, pakaian akademik graduan, graduan kehormat, graduan usaha sama akademik, prompter, jawatankuasa khas untuk menguruskan staf akademik yang menyertai perarakan utama Konvokesyen, serta Majlis Santapan Malam yang digilirkan di kalangan pusat-pusat pengajian.

Urusetia pula bertanggungjawab terhadap pelbagai persiapan, mengemaskini senarai tetamu, menguruskan kad jemputan, membantu dalam penyerahan kad dan persediaan untuk graduan mengambil pakaian akademik, membantu juga dalam perjalanan Ekspo Konvokesyen anjuran Bahagian Hal-Ehwal Pelajar dengan jawatankuasa pelajarnya, membantu dalam persiapan Majlis Santapan Malam Canselor, merancang dan menerbitkan Buku Cenderamata, merancang dan menerbitkan



Sebelum Cokmar Diarak

Mohamad Abdullah
Sastera '87

*Dr. Hashim Hussin Yaacob sebagai
Presiden Persatuan Kakitangan
Akademik dan Pentadbir membawa
Cokmar dalam perarakan masuk*



Jubah Naib Canselor sedang dipastikan kemas oleh seorang pegawai, En. Khalid Mohd Isa



Kekemasan pakaian konvo sentiasa diawasi oleh petugas-petugas khas hingga ke saat sebelum naik pentas menerima ijazah



Kerja jurukamera dan petugas siaran adalah antara tugas teknikal yang rumit, memerlukan keselarasan dan kesinambungan untuk memastikan penyiaran yang sempurna dan penghasilan CD yang berkualiti

Panduan Pentadbiran, penyediaan teks ucapan utama dan lain-lain lagi. Malah pihak Urusetia juga bertanggungjawab untuk perancangan media yang memastikan Upacara Konvokesyen mendapat liputan sewajarnya. Secara tradisi pihak media bekerjasama rapat dengan universiti di dalam membuat liputan menyeluruh sepanjang Upacara Konvokesyen, bermula sehari sebelumnya.

Maka bermulalah persiapan yang berasaskan Panduan Pentadbiran. Berbeza dengan peringkat awal dahulu, kini masing-masing sudah tahu dan berusaha memainkan peranan. Apatah lagi, kini begitu banyak aktiviti universiti berlangsung, walau pun upacara konvokesyen sudah menjelang.

Antara cabarannya pada hari ini ialah menetapkan ijazah mengikut sidang. Ini kerapkalinya amat sukar dilakukan memandangkan bilangan graduan yang begitu besar. 15 tahun dahulu, terdapat hanya dua atau empat sidang, kini menjadi sembilan sidang. Itu pun masih belum mencukupi. Bilangan tempat duduk Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra (DTSP) hanya dapat menampung sekitar 2,000 orang berbanding dengan bilangan graduan yang kerapkali mencecah lebih 2,000 pada setiap sidang. Ini menyulitkan graduan yang diandaikan ingin membawa masuk dua orang tetamu.

Mereka yang ingin membawa lebih dari dua orang tetamu pula membuat rayuan yang menyebabkan kesukaran membuat keputusan, apatah lagi pertimbangan kemanusiaan memandangkan ini merupakan detik kejayaan yang sangat bermakna. Namun pada masa yang sama, pertimbangan-pertimbangan lain juga perlu dilihat dengan saksama, seperti keselamatan dan penafian hak graduan lain ketika ingin membawa masuk tetamu mereka apabila dewan sudah penuh.

Sesetengah tetamu graduan pula meninggalkan Dewan sebaik sahaja anak atau saudara maranya selesai menerima ijazah tanpa menunggu sehingga upacara selesai. Ia agak mencatitkan perjalanan majlis apabila banyak berlaku pergerakan yang kurang menyenangkan di kalangan tetamu graduan. Pelbagai alasan diberi kepada penyambut tetamu. Paling popular ialah untuk ke tandas.

Begitu juga dengan disiplin graduan. Masalah pakaian yang tidak bersesuaian, datang melewati waktu, tidak berada di tempat yang sewajarnya tatkala upacara hampir bermula, tidak mengikut peraturan yang ditetapkan semasa menerima ijazah, graduan meletakkan tulisan "I Love You Mum" di atas topi ijazah dan pelbagai lagi. Semuanya menjadi rencah menarik upacara konvokesyen.

Bagi Pendaftar yang terpaksa berdiri di atas pentas sepanjang upacara berjalan, tentunya lebih banyak kenangan yang dapat dikongsi. Antara ialah graduan yang menyampaikan salam ibu bapa kepada Tuanku Canselor.

Persiapan untuk memastikan upacara konvokesyen berjalan lancar adalah pengalaman yang sangat memberi kesan, tekanan dan keseronokan. Ia adalah pengalaman yang menjadi kemuncak dalam pengurusan acara utama. Ia tidak memerlukan pihak profesional luar melakukannya, cukup dengan gabungan tenaga pelbagai pihak yang memaknakan kerja berpasukan yang rapat dan penuh ikhlas.

Tekanan juga amat terasa dalam penyediaan buku Upacara Konvokesyen, terutamanya apabila berlaku perubahan dan penambahan graduan pada saat-saat akhir. Mencari bahan dan memastikan faktanya betul adalah cabaran yang besar, malah ada ketikanya pencetak enggan mencetaknya kerana bimbang tidak dapat menyelesaikan pada waktu yang ditetapkan.

Graduan mula tiba untuk mengambil pakaian akademik beberapa hari sebelum upacara konvokesyen berlangsung. Pakaian akademik mesti mencukupi dan menepati saiz dan ijazah yang diterima. Pengambilan pakaian akademik boleh diwakilkan oleh rakan-rakan, walaupun ada masalah yang timbul.

Ketika inilah kesibukan kampus mula terasa. Para petugas keselamatan mula memainkan peranan mengawal trafik dan letak kenderaan. Walaupun begitu, terdapat segelintir yang berterlagah dan enggan memberi kerjasama. Ada ketikanya graduan mencabar petugas Jabatan Keselamatan bertumbuk semata-mata kerana tidak dibenarkan melakukan jalan pintas.

Ketika memasuki Dewan pula, sebilangan tetamu marah-marah dan memandang remeh kawalan jabatan keselamatan. Ini menambahkan lagi masalah.

Acara taklimat kepada graduan juga adalah satu cabaran besar. Dengan bilangan graduan yang bertambah saban tahun. Graduan yang akhirnya tidak mendapat cuti dari majikan adalah antara penyebab kesukaran untuk memastikan semua graduan dapat hadir semasa taklimat diadakan oleh Pendaftar. Sedangkan ini amat penting untuk memastikan

upacara berjalan sempurna. Akibat sikap mengambil mudah dan sambil lewa, banyak kesilapan berlaku semasa upacara berlangsung.

Bagi yang bertugas di urusetia graduan, seawal jam 7.00 pagi mereka telah mula membantu dengan penuh sabar. Menyaksikan bagaimana para petugas membantu graduan mengenakan pakaian akademik, seolah-olah membantu anak atau adik-adik sendiri merayakan satu kejayaan cemerlang, terasa umpama berada dalam keluarga yang besar. Mereka membuat penelitian terakhir hatta ketika graduan mula menaiki tangga pentas, membetulkan baju dan topi dan melayan pelbagai karenah yang ada.

Upacara konvokesyen adalah lambang kejayaan dan juga detik bermakna yang harus diraikan. Penghargaan perlu diberi kepada mantan-mantan Naib Canselor dan Pendaftar yang telah meletakkan asasnya yang menjadi tradisi kebanggaan semua pihak. Inilah hari istimewa yang mungkin sekali bagi kebanyakan graduan untuk disambut bersama kesyukuran oleh graduan dan mereka yang banyak menabur jasa, ibu bapa, keluarga, isteri malah kekasih hati!

Namun pesan bijak bestari, sejauh mana meniti pelangi, jangan lupa berpijak di bumi. Tinggi mana pun terbang di awan, sesekali singgahlah di denai kehidupan, di mana pernah berkongsi makna kejayaan. Jangan lupa kampus yang pernah menjadi tempat menyaring pengetahuan dan memaknakan kehidupan. Jika pernah tumpah air mata luka, kampus ini tetap ada manisnya. Kampus Universiti sentiasa melambai alumnya kembali menabur bakti.



Pegawai khas ditugaskan untuk memberi khidmat berterusan kepada graduan-graduan kurang upaya



Pemandu-pemandu Universiti mesti sentiasa bersedia untuk mengangkut def-def



Mohamad Abdullah (B.A.[Comm] '87) is currently a Deputy Registrar of Vice-Chancellor's Office, USM. He can be reached at pro@usm.my

The Grand March

Hamima Dona Mustafa
B. A. '73

The **Gamelan** has become a colourful fixture of the convocation

The Grand March

The stage is set. The Chancellor's chair is in place, taking centre-stage. Behind that, the rows of chairs for the rest of the stage-party are arranged. Potted yellow chrysanthemums adorn the edge of the stage. Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra is aglow with happy faces of parents and guests, waiting in anticipation for the ceremony to begin. The music-makers wait for the buzzer to sound, their cue to strike the first notes of the *Grand March* which ushers the academic procession.

For Universiti Sains Malaysia's first Registrar, Dato' Noel Ogle, the music accompanying the academic procession as it makes its way to the stage lends an aura of "pomp and splendour".

In the early days, when the convocation ceremony took place at the *Dewan Sri Pinang*, next to the Esplanade, recorded music was used. Later, in 1979, when the venue changed to the newly-built *Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra*, live music was introduced.

Mr. Che Mat Jusoh, from the School of Fine Arts, who presently leads the *gamelan* group during the convocation, recalled, how on one occasion, he was given the task of blowing the buffalo horn or *tentuang* to indicate the entrance of the academic procession. Much to his horror, no sound emanated from it, no matter how hard he tried. Fortunately, when he blew the last note, it could be heard. Those present barely had the time to stand up to greet the Mace-bearer who preceded the academic procession.

Mr. Abdul Malik Ismail, another staff member involved with the traditional music group, from the Centre for the Development of Arts and Culture (*Dewan Budaya*), reminisced, "At one time, when the number of graduates was small, the person responsible for the music during the ceremony was an organist. He was located on a lower platform in front of the stage."

Not too long after that, the Royal Police Band of Kedah-Perlis accompanied the event. This practice, however, was later discontinued.

According to Dato' Ogle, "we needed more space to seat the increasing number of parents due to the expanding



In earlier convocations, the police band was part of the ceremonial ensemble

number of students graduating. The second factor was we could no longer afford the cost of hiring the police band."

Fortunately, now, the university is able to provide its own music-makers. Three groups are in attendance to liven up the convocation ceremony which spans over four days, with two sessions daily. They are the *gamelan* group, the traditional music group, and the jazz band which was established in 1998, under the guidance of Mr. Razif Mohd. from the School of Fine Arts.

"Music makes people happy," said Mr. Abdul Malik. "While waiting for the convocation ceremony to begin music keeps the guests entertained. Otherwise they would feel bored."

He admitted, however, that not everyone attending the convocation welcomes the music.

Mr. Abdul Malik said, "Parents who were seated very close to the bands complained that the music drowned the announcement of the names of their graduating children."

All three group leaders related how Mr. Razif received a nasty note containing unprintable words from one of the parents who had missed hearing his child's name when it was announced.

While that might be true, the musicians have also been handed notes from a few members of the stage party, requesting the music be played louder as they were getting sleepy.



The Grand March

Backstage

One of the bands providing music during convocations

The **gamelan** provides an indigenous atmosphere to the convocation

Over the years, the seating of the musicians in the hall changed. In 1979, when space was not a problem, the musicians were located in front of the stage, on a lower-level platform. In the '90s, the musicians have to be located on the upper level, at the end of the hall, facing the stage. At the time of writing, alternative seating plans are being considered.

The multi-day-dual-sessions' nature of the ceremony due to the expanding student population, multiplied the task of the musicians. They have to bear in mind that while the sets of parents and students attending the sessions differ, most of the members of the stage party comprise of the same people. Hence, the musicians have to select a variety of musical pieces so as not to be repetitive and boring. One can hear evergreen P. Ramlee compositions as well as tunes popular during the '60s and '70s. Regular pieces from the jazz band would be themes from the movies, such as *The Pink Panther* and TV series, such as, *Mission Impossible*. Also included is swing music of the '30s and '40s.

Mr. Razif said, "We try to tailor the music to match the audience's taste, something they can relate to. We also

have to consider the skills of the music students who make up the band."

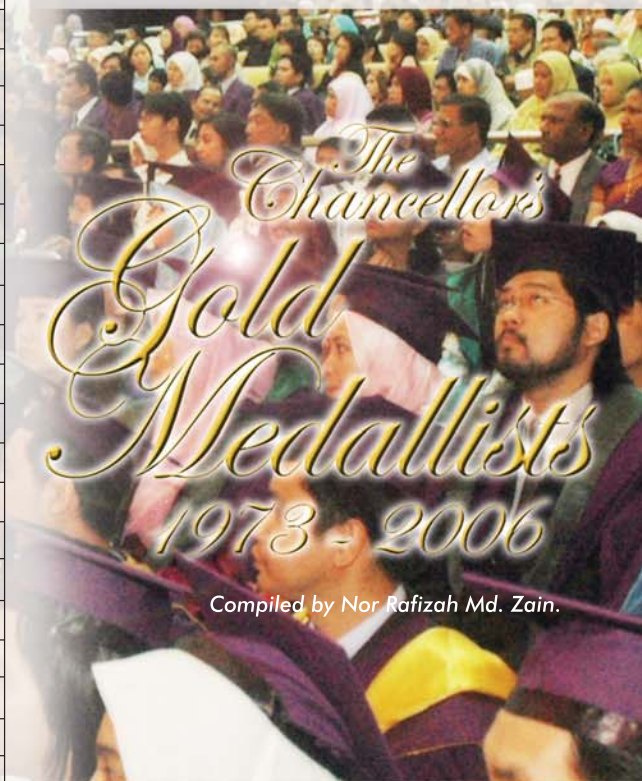
The traditional group's repertoire includes *Joget Pahang*, *Serampang Laut* and *Joget Hitam Manis*. The gamelan group plays *Togok*, *Dikir Puteri* and *Dayung Sampan*, among others.

Come rain or shine, when the convocation sessions begin, the musicians are ready to play their part. Finally, the last name on the list of graduates is announced. Everyone stands at attention. The jazz band strikes up the national anthem, *Negaraku*. After that, the mace-bearer bows to the Chancellor, walks to the mace-stand and with white-gloved hands lifts the mace. The band strikes the *Grand March*, accompanying him as he leads the academic procession to descend the stage. The guests then join the procession to leave the hall. With the last note still in the air, we all say, "Thank you for the music."



Hamima Dona is currently a lecturer at the Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA), USM and she can be reached at hamima@usm.my.

	NAME	DEGREE	YEAR	CURRENT JOB	ADDRESS
1	Goh Ban Lee	B. Soc. Sc.	1973	Retired academician	228, Jalan Pemancar, Penang.
2	Ramachandran a/l Narayanasamy	B. Soc. Sc.	1974	Consultant	VENK MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS 18 Jalan Tempinis 3 Lucky Garden, Bangsar 59100 Kuala Lumpur
3	Kam Suan Pheng	B. Sc. with Education	1975		
4	Hasnah Abdullah	B. Soc. Sc	1977		
5	Yeo Geok Hoe	B. Sc. with Education	1977		
6	Yuen Kah Hay	B. Pharm.	1978	Lecturer	School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, USM, Penang.
7	Govinathan a/l Palappan Pillai	B. Sc.	1979		
8	Hoe Kek Fei	B. Pharm.	1980		
9	Idris Haji Jusoh	B. Soc. Sc	1980	Chief Minister of Terengganu	Pejabat Badan Perhubungan UMNO Negeri Terengganu, Terengganu.
10	Wong Kwai Wah	B. Sc. with Education	1981		
11	Ragini a/p K.Ponnudurai	B. Pharm.	1982		
12	Ahmad B. Ismail	B. Sc.	1983		
13	Tan Chee Cheong	B. Applied Science	1983		
14	Chia Tuan Ngeng	B. Pharm.	1984		
15	Cheam Shaw Jean	B. Sc.	1985		
16	Tan Man Wah	B. Sc.	1986		
17	Teh Guat Kew	B. Applied Science	1987		
18	Alexander Natusch	B. Sc. (HBP)	1987		
19	Leong May Fung	B. Sc.	1988		
20	Loo Chii Shian	B. Pharm.	1989		
21	Lee Vee Meng	B. Pharm.	1990		
22	Leong Weng Hoong	B. Applied Science	1992		
23	Lee Kin Seng	B. Technology	1992		
24	Pearl Yeoh Su Lynn	B. Sc.	1993		
25	Chen Kah Min	B. Technology	1994		
26	Liu Min-Tzau	B. Comm	1994		
27	Lim Chia Yen	B. Applied Science	1995		
28	Dean Tong Chee Kion	B. Management	1996		
29	Chow San San	B. Applied Science	1997		
30	Yap Siew Ping	B. Pharm.	July 1998		
31	Lenny Koay	B. Applied Science	August 1998		
32	Vikneswaran a/l Murugaiyah	B. Pharm.	1999		5-7-11, Desa Mawar, Lintang Kampung Melayu 2, Penang.
33	Teh Chee Hak	B. Engineering	2000	Engineer	Intel Malaysia, Bayan Lepas, Penang.
34	Adriana Irawati Nur Bt. Ibrahim	B. Sc.	2001		11 Jalan AU5C/6, Lembah Keramat, Kuala Lumpur.
35	Fazlina Ahmad	Doctor of Medicine	2002		221 Taman Tambun, Ipoh, Perak
36	Siti Salina Mohd Din	B. Management	2003	HR Executive	Shell Malaysia Exploration & Production, Miri, Sarawak.
37	Nor Aidaniza Abdul Muttlib	B. Dental Surgery	2004	<i>Pensyarah Pelatih Pergigian</i>	USM Health Campus, Kubang Kerian, Kelantan.
38	Tammy Teoh Han Qi	Doctor of Medicine	2005		6, Lorong Merak Satu, Gelugor, PG.
39	Tan Chin Chin	B. Humanities	2006	Teacher, Persatuan Kanak-Kanak Cerebral Palsy (Sepastic)	83, Lengkok Batu Lanchang, Georgetown, Penang.
40	Ling Yoke Li	B. Dental Surgery	2006	Dentist, Seremban Hospital	6, Taman Guru, Kampung Koh, Sitiawan, Perak.





Datin Shamsiah Mohamed
(B. Humanities '73)
Current Status:
Retired from the Institute of
Diplomatic and Foreign
Relations (IDFR) 2005



**Datin Huzaimah
Mohd Yusoff**
(B. Soc. Sc. '73)
Current Status:
Senior Vice-President,
Daya Communications Sdn Bhd



Professor Sukor Kassim
(B. Soc. Sc. '73)
Current Status:
Professor at the Women's
Development Research
Centre (KANITA), USM



Juhana Annuar
(B. Soc. Sc. '74)
Current Status:
Runs a bookshop in
Crans-Montana,
Switzerland



**Y. Bhg. Puan Sri
Fauziah Shahrom**
(B. Soc. Sc. '75)
Current Status:
Retired as the Registrar of
USM 2000



**Dato' Abdullah Abdul
Wahab** (B. Soc. Sc. '76)
Current Status:
Marketing Consultant,
Rafidah Abdullah
Enterprise



Haji Mohd Maidin Hussin
(B. Soc. Sc. '76)
Current Status:
Director, Record Department,
the National Archives
of Malaysia



Dato' B. Bhaskaran Pillai
(B. Sc. '78)
Current Status:
Director, Performance
Consulting International
(M) Sdn Bhd



Dr. Sarfuddin Othman
(B. Sc. '78)
Current Status:
Deputy Managing Director,
Global Carries Bhd



Prabhakaran S.Nair
(B. Soc. Sc. '78)
Current Status:
Director, Pustaka Wira
Negara, Memorial Tunku
Abdul Rahman



Zaiton Md. Noh
(B. Sc. [HBP] '79)
Current Status:
Retired from Head of Trading
Business Development,
Island & Peninsular Bhd.



Datin Rafidah Abdul Jalil
(B. Sc. '79)
Current Status:
Marketing Consultant,
Rafidah Abdullah
Enterprise



Senator Datuk Hj. Rizuan Abd. Hamid
(B. Sc. [HBP] '79)
Current Status:
Senator



Quah Eng Hock
(B. Sc. [HBP] '80)
Current Status:
Property Consultant,
HIM Management
Consultant



Dato' Seri Hj. Idris bin Jusoh
(B. Soc. Sc. '80)
Current Status:
Chief Minister of Terengganu



Hasan Addly Mohd Isa
(B. Pharm. '82)
Current Status:
Managing Director,
Geliga Sistem Sdn Bhd



Shaifubahrim Mohd Salleh
(B. Sc. '83)
Current Status:
Chairman, Frontline
Resources Sdn Bhd



Datuk Seri Hj. Mohd Ali Mohd Rustam
(B. Soc. Sc. '84)
Current Status:
Chief Minister of Melaka



Dato' Seri Mahdzir Khalid
(B.A. [Education] '84)
Current Status:
Chief Minister of Kedah



Peggie Ng
(B.A. '86)
Current Status:
Performance Consultant,
Pritchett Rummler Brache,
Malaysia



Teresa Kok Suh Sim
(B. Comm. '90)
Current Status:
Democratic Action Party
(DAP) Member of Parliament
for Seputeh



Zainal Ariffin Abd. Hamid (ZAIBO)
(B. Humanities '90)
Current Status:
Entertainer



Abdul Hamid Abdullah
(B. Sc. with Education '99)
Current Status:
Producer,
Gunung Daik Sdn Bhd
Advertising and Video
Productions



Ahmad Fedtri Yahya
(B. Comm. '03)
Current Status:
TV3 Presenter

Minden Memories

Graduates from the Middle East celebrating with friends

Special Feelings:

As the case for every foreigner away from his homeland, I felt lost for the first few days (Aug. 1991) I step in the Malaysian Great Land. Nevertheless, thanks to God, the first people I met made me feeling safer and changed my understanding about this society. Since that day, I really enjoy staying the lifestyle and I do not face any real troubles, even though, many foreign colleagues had faced some problems such as food, communications, language, weather, etc. Generally, people here are very good to me as well to my family. I feel like my home country.

USM

My great impression about Malaysia and Malaysian People was topped up when I enter USM. The first man I meet that time was an officer at the one of the hostels. He insisted a lot to help me and offered to send me to the school and IPS. He carried my on his motorbike. That was my first experience to ride a motorbike. He dropped me in front of the School of Chem. Sc. There were I met my supervisor Prof. Datuk Muhammad Idris Saleh, and co-supervisor Prof. Bahruddin Saad. These two great men make the life easy from me from the first moment I meet with them. Everything went smooth until this moment. God bless them as well all the entire Malaysian Society.

As I am here since 1992, I really fell that I born (scientifically) at this University. I consider every convocation day is my birthday. I enjoy looking to the faces of the graduated student, families, colleagues and visitors. I finished my M.Sc. as well Ph.D. here. Now I join back this University as a lecturer of organic chemistry. I like very much the scientific environment at this school.

I like the learning system, curriculum, facilities, library, security, and others all up to date. I consider myself as a missionary person for this University. Accordingly, I had encouraged many of my friend, colleagues, others, not to hesitate and join Malaysian Universalities, specially this prestigious University.



Dr. Abdussalam Salhin Mohamed Ali

Postdoctoral fellow:
Organic Synthesis,
Organic Chemistry Division
School of Chemical Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Position: Lecturer
Nationality: Libya
Religious: Islam
Marital Status: married (2 children)
Birth Date. 03/07/1963

B.Sc.:
Sebha University, Libya, 1985 (Chemistry)

M.Sc.:
Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1995
(Analytical Chemistry)

Ph.D.:
Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1997
(Analytical Chemistry)

A Memorable 33rd USM Convocation

The last time I participated in a ceremony was during the 33rd USM Convocation Ceremony on 5 August 2004, when I was conferred my MSc degree. For me, the Convocation Ceremony was one of many highlights of that year and was one of the most exciting and memorable event I have ever attended. I cannot contain my enthusiasm to enjoy that event again because I will be receiving my PhD degree soon. It means that I will be able to relive those wonderful memories once again.

In fact, when I looked back on my previous experience when I was awarded my degree in 2000 in Libya as compared with the experience at USM, I would probably say that "the difference is clear"; perhaps it was better in Malaysia than in Libya.

The memories I had here during the 33rd Convocation in USM has left a permanent impression on me. I treasure the friendship cultivated over the years with staff and fellow students, studying in a wonderful faculty with helpful staff, the exhilarating experience of walking across campus, and having pictures taken with friends from different graduation schools will remain as fond memories.



Mr. Abdelnaser Omran
School of Housing, Building and Planning
Universiti Sains Malaysia
11800 Minden
Penang.

Awarded the MSc degree
(Project Management) from USM in 2004

PhD Candidate in the field of
Environmental Management



Ahmed Awaisu
Doctoral Degree Student
PhD Clinical Pharmacy Program

School of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia
11800 Minden
Penang.

My Wonderous Experience with the 33rd USM Convocation Ceremony

I enrolled into the Universiti Sains Malaysia's Postgraduate degree programme in January, 2003 and successfully completed the Masters degree in Clinical Pharmacy in May, 2004.

Consequently I was conferred the Master of Clinical Pharmacy Degree (MPharm. Clinical) on August 5, 2007.

One of the most memorable events in my life was the USM's 33rd Convocation Ceremony when I received the conferment. The exciting pre-convocation activities which have been the long-standing culture of the university are quite entertaining and inspiring. Notably, the convocation day was impressive and wonderful. I was mesmerized by the aura of the convocation procession and the obvious multi-cultural diversities of thousands (or is it hundreds?) of families that gathered to share the joy with their children. For me, it was yet another milestone in the accomplishment of my life ambition and indeed a remarkable achievement of life. The convocation day gave me resolute that my dreams of reaching self-esteem are on the way.

I must say that I was most impressed with the organizational level and courtesy of the convocation organizers. I will always remember that day.

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Another good habit is to anticipate the unexpected. We have to anticipate accidents even if we think that we are not the likely victims. Just as it is often said, prepare an umbrella when it is still a sunny day and you are able to use it when the weather turns rainy. Maybank also offers insurance plans for you to choose from to protect not only your interest but also those of your loved ones.

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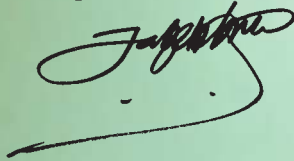
Who knows you better

Giving Back

Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) has set up the Alumni Endowment Fund for individuals and corporate organisations to contribute towards the development and progress of USM. As an alumnus I am sure you would like to see your alma mater becoming a vibrant learning centre and a global university of distinction with state of the art resources and facilities. Every cent of your contribution will take USM closer towards realising the aspiration. Every donation will qualify for tax deduction.

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and make USM globally respectable*

Sincerely



Associate Professor Mohamed Talhah Idrus
Editor
The Leader



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Alumni Liaison Office (ALO)

Level 5, Chancellory Building

Universiti Sains Malaysia

11800 Minden

Penang

For more information on the Alumni Endowment Fund, please visit www.usm.my/alumni.

Getting Around USM



Stadium

Lecture Theatres (DK)

- 1 DK A, B & C
- 2 DK D, E & F
- 3 DK G - R
- 4 DK S - W
- 5 DK X
- 6 DK Y
- 7 DK Kompleks Sains
- 8 DK Z
- 9 DK SK1, SK2, SK3 & SK4



Hamzah Sendut Library

Museum and Gallery Tuanku Fauziah



Balai Islam



Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra



Chancellory Building

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Full Name: _____

Identity Card No.: _____ Gender: _____ Cell Phone No.: _____

Email 1: _____ Email 2: _____

Correspondence Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Town: _____ State: _____ Telephone No. (Residence): _____

Name of Organisation: _____ Post: _____

Office Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Town: _____ State: _____

Office Telephone No.: _____ Fax No.: _____

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Undergraduate Postgraduate Course: _____ Year: _____

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 Bangunan D01, Universiti Sains Malaysia,
 11800 Minden, Penang.
 Tel/Fax: 04-6569370
 Email: alumnusm@tm.net.my
 Web: www.alumni.usm.net.my

- **USM Toastmasters Meeting**
Every Tuesday on the first & third week of the month
- **Alumni Week**
 - Engineering Campus, Nibong Tebal
October 2007
 - Health Campus, Kubang Kerian
October 2007
- **36th Convocation**
Minden Campus, Penang
15-19 August 2007
- **Get-Together**
Minden Campus, Penang
31 October 2007
- **Bohikampus**
Minden Campus, Penang
7-9 December 2007

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MALAYSIAN VICE-CHANCELLORS COMMITTEE - UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND VICE CHANCELLORS COMMITTEE
5 & 6 JUNE 2007

Noor Soraya Ahyaudin
 M. Comm. (Science and Environmental Journalism) '07

USM hosted two important tri-countries meetings on the 5 - 6 June, which were the Australian and the New Zealand and the Malaysian Vice-Chancellors. On 5 June, the Universities Australia formerly called Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) met the Malaysian Vice-Chancellors Committee to discuss about staff development. A meeting between the Malaysian and the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors Committee was held on 6 June. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors took note that USM is currently a research-intensive university.





Day job: Lecturer

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