



USM

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA

MARCH 2008  
Volume 3 No.1

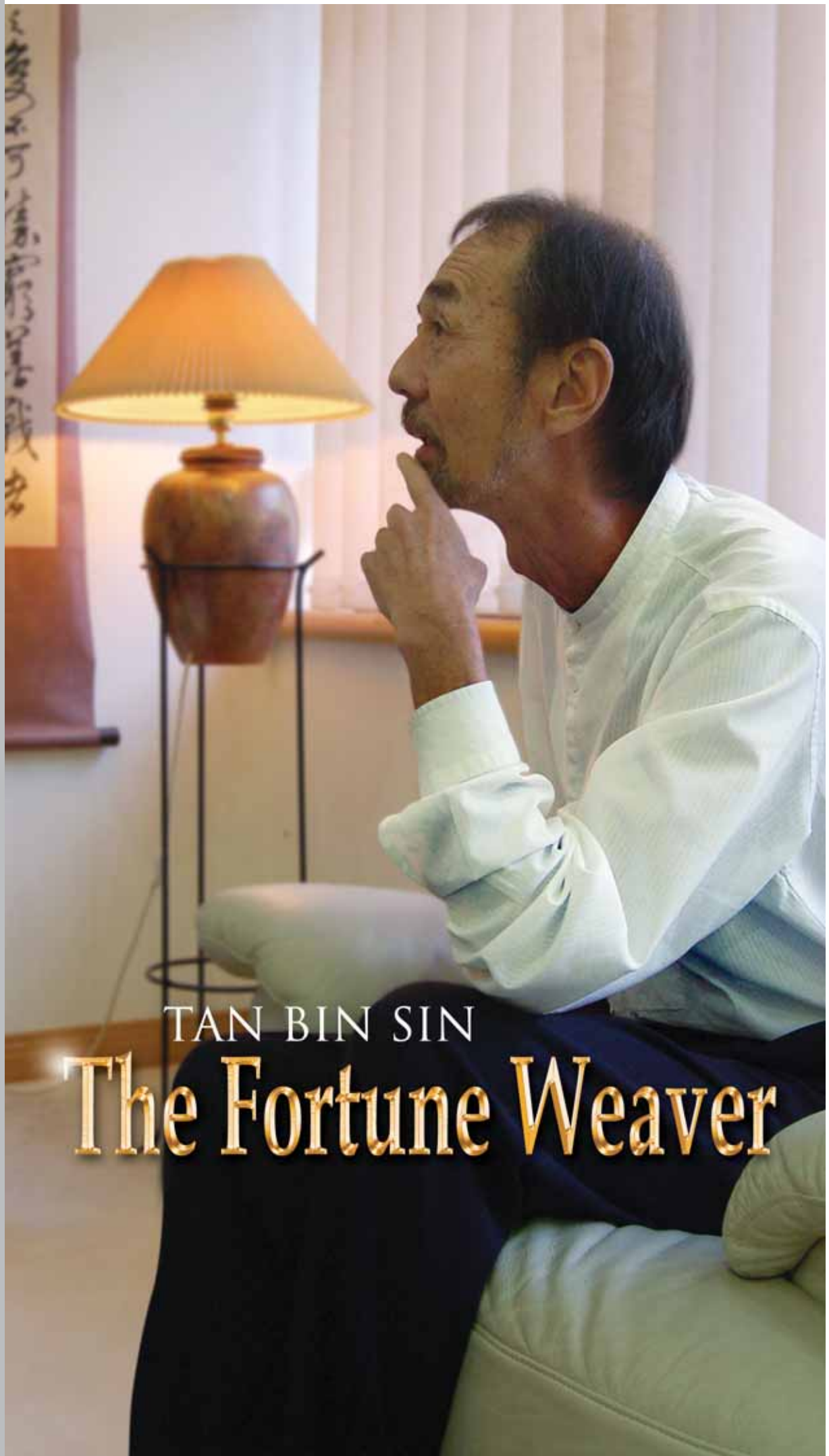
# The Leader

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA ALUMNI MAGAZINE

ISSN 1675 - 0063



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TAN BIN SIN

## The Fortune Weaver



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# Editorial Board

## From the Editor

Kicking off its third year of production, *The Leader* features our alumni on their own.

We are aware that there are many alumni who have gone into one kind of business or another. This seems like a good story to make. However, selecting a representative sample proved to be tricky. We would have loved to cover our alumni who have just started as well as those who have broken into international grounds, but we could only manage so much. We hope a sampling of those covered and mentioned in this issue will please most of you.

"Keeping Tracks" supplement our coverage of these groups of alumni by printing their business cards. We hope alumni will find the information useful when making business dealings, perhaps in getting tuition services or chicken supply, right up to soliciting high-tech services like bar codes and DNA technologies.

With the advent of the new year, the Alumni Liason Office has been infused with new blood which we hope can smoothen the production and improve the quality of our magazine. Almost all the new faces are now directly involved with the production of *The Leader*.

We are still handicapped by a now perennial problem, lack of old photographs. Please help us to build up an archive of old photographs by sending in photos of your days in USM. This magazine is ours; we should try to sustain its production through co-operation and feedback.

We are also keen to see our Alumni Club House becoming USM's new landmark this May. But bricks and other building materials need to be purchased. Even those alumni who have contributed should try to increase their contribution. This building has big potentials in high profiling our alumni and our alma mater through activities that also bond us tighter. Only we, the alumni, can turn this dream into reality. We have many more dreams that need to be realized through dedicated participations. The alumni should continually participate and contribute. The alumni is no one else but us. It IS us.

**Chief Editor**  
Mohamed Talhah Idrus  
B. Soc. Sc. '74

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#### Errata

In Vol.4 December 2007:

- Page 5, in "Who is Who", it should be "...Omar is Omar Haron (B. Soc. Sc. '74), Chief Executive Officer,...".
- Page 5, the caption for photograph at the top should be "Reenacting ... *Balikampus 2005*".
- Page 48, the current status for Prof. Datin Dr. Rashidah Shuib should be "Director, Women's Development Research Centre (KANITA)". For Masrah Abidin, it should be "Datin Masrah Abidin". For Abdul Rais Abdul Majid, it should be "Dato' Abdul Rais Abdul Majid".

Tan Bin Sin  
(Photograph by Mohamed Talhah Idrus)

# The Fortune Weaver

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

Yong Check Yoon

It is a mere coincidence that Datuk Tan Bin Sin who has a 'Midas touch' in his business ventures came from a small town called *Pasir Mas* (literally translated as 'Golden Sand' from Malay) in the eastern coastal state of Kelantan.

On the contrary to what one would have imagined, Tan described himself as someone who is not ambitious. In fact, his childhood ambition was to be a postman and be contented with a paltry income of RM200. However, it was fate that rolled the dice.

At the age of thirteen he left his hometown to learn more about the world and to fulfil his fertile imagination beyond the confines of the small town. Tan, with his parents' reluctant approval, hitchhiked with a friend on a circuitous journey north to Southern Thailand then headed south to Penang and to Singapore.

Tan told *The Leader* that "If I have set my mind on doing something, nobody can stop me". This undiluted determination helps mould him into a high calibre entrepreneur with businesses spawned in more than six countries. With a number of 'firsts' under his belt, Tan can proudly say that he is a pioneer in Malaysian anti-counterfeiting crusade, taxi top advertising, poster board advertising, organic DNA anti-counterfeiting features and a list of others.

After obtaining good grades in his Higher School Certificate examination, Tan enrolled into the School of Social Sciences, USM, majoring in sociology. After graduating in 1974, he joined the Malaysian Civil Service and was attached to the Prime Minister's department. After a few years in the civil service, Tan found the job not challenging enough for his imaginative mind and he resigned.



*The Fortune Weaver*

Tan joined Lintas Advertising and became a media research executive. The exposure as a student in USM especially in subjects like Quantitative Methods and Research Methodology helped him in bringing Chinese video programmes from Hong Kong to *Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM)* and buying airtime in RTM for advertisements.

"There was no copyright law then and so I have to fight piracy and introduce anti-counterfeiting measures," he recalled. With his research background he helped RTM collect data for their advertising spots and eventually pioneered the privatisation of RTM. From there on he made a mark in the media industry. At the age of 28 he was already earning an income of RM 12,000 a month.

Tan married his campus sweetheart Datin Wong Mei Cheng. Wong is a tall, sweet and charming lady who graduated from the School of Humanities majoring in Communication. She is now a homemaker after retiring from Public Finance Berhad as the manager in Customer Services Division in 1994. The couple are blessed with two beautiful daughters.

Tan's strength lies in his ability to turn challenges into opportunities. He claimed that the liberal education that he had in USM has to a certain extent contributed to his success. His pioneering spirit as well as his innovative ideas and willingness to take risks add up to his unique qualities. Due to his remarkable performance in the media industry, Tan is being sought after by many, particularly by politicians. The breakthrough came when the former MCA President Tan Sri Lee San Choon engaged Tan to help him in his media campaign.

*A recent picture of Tan and Wong with their daughters  
(Photograph courtesy of Datin Wong Mei Cheng)*



*Tan and Wong in the 70s  
(Photograph courtesy of Datin Wong Mei Cheng)*

*The Fortune Weaver*

*Tan's Mini Minor was a regular feature at Block 20  
(Photograph courtesy of Datin Wong Mei Cheng)*

The 'golden touch' that he brought with him from his hometown stuck with him and eventually brought him fame, fortune and financial freedom. Tan owned his first company Media House 30 years ago and through this company he brought in Chinese copyrights video movies from Hong Kong and established the Golden Star Video which introduced the first video advertising in the world.

A self-made person, Tan believes in going into a business that has no competition. "I was practising the Blue Ocean Strategy concept years before the book was published," said Tan. Being a risk taker, he has the foresight to see and seize opportunities. The RJ Reynolds taxi top advertising was his brainchild and it can be claimed to be the first in the Asia-Pacific region.

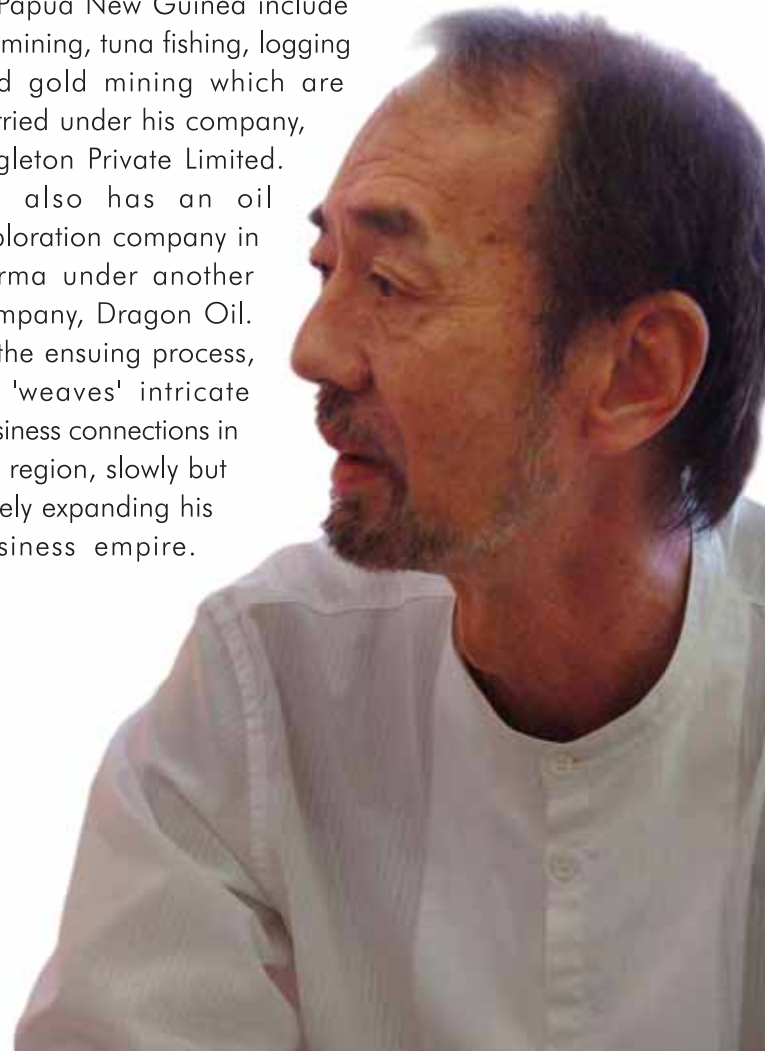
From taxi top advertising, he then obtained the sole right to start advertising poster board structures in schools and universities. The concept is currently being used in hospitals.

Tan revealed his 'secret' of being so successful in proceeding from one successful venture to another: "I dare to take risks because if you do not take risk you will not know your potential." He also said that to be successful in business one has to find a niche area and it is best to "walk along the path of least resistance". This explains why he is involved in pioneering projects and businesses because they are virtually competition-free, a 'path of least resistance'.



*Tan and Wong posing outside hostel Block 20  
(where the International House now stands)  
(Photograph courtesy of Datin Wong Mei Cheng)*

From media industry he diversified his business to other strategic areas such as music and entertainment. He also expanded his business to countries in the region such as Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Burma. His business ventures in Papua New Guinea include tin mining, tuna fishing, logging and gold mining which are carried under his company, Eagleton Private Limited. He also has an oil exploration company in Burma under another company, Dragon Oil. In the ensuing process, he 'weaves' intricate business connections in the region, slowly but surely expanding his business empire.





*The Fortune Weaver*

A modest and humble person, Tan admitted that he is not a hardworking person. He said, "I work only 20% and play 80%." He added that he would go to work at 2pm and by 4pm he would have left his office. Setting a specific target in what you do is important, he told *The Leader* "If you go to the sea to catch five fishes then you will come home with some fish. However, if you go and fish just wanting to catch fish then you come home empty handed." His latest venture was in the pioneering of the latest technology, the organic DNA.

"I walk along  
the path of least  
resistance."

- Tan Bin Sin

According to Tan, he financed many researchers and bought the rights of the organic DNA from a Taiwanese scientist. He claimed that this is the only organic DNA in the world which is used as an anti-counterfeiting solution. At this stage he can just reveal that organic DNA is an anti-counterfeiting method that cannot be replicated just as a thumbprint. Every single organic DNA coding is different and unique. The research on this product is still classified as 'confidential'.

Another of Tan's forte is his ability to mix around easily with all races. He attributed this to his upbringing in Pasir Mas where the village folks are mostly Malays. He continues to touch base with his teachers because according to him without them he would not be where he is now.

One of his fondest memories in USM was when Tan and his football team had a match with Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) in Brastagi, Sumatera in 1972. He was the goalkeeper and he allowed USU to score 11 goals. He recalled that the USM team was almost mobbed by the crowd because of the defeat. The people there had heard that the Malaysian national team was playing and thus when the USM team was defeated, they almost vented their frustration and disappointment on the 'Malaysian team'. Moreover, this happened soon after Indonesia's confrontation with Malaysia. "I will never forget that episode in my life," Tan laughed. The person who allowed the Indonesian team to score 11 goals has his share of adventure in life.

Tan's philosophy is to leave behind a legacy of his good name. His principle in venturing into business is simple. He said, "I will go into any business as long it is legal and moral but most certainly, profitable. Anything that results in hurting people I will not get myself involved." It is pointless to have 'Midas touch' if one's reputation is in tatters. Tan is one such living testimony that you can be rich without having to sell your soul and that you do not need to come from big cities to become the cream of society.

*Tan occasionally takes time off to play this classical guitar in his office*



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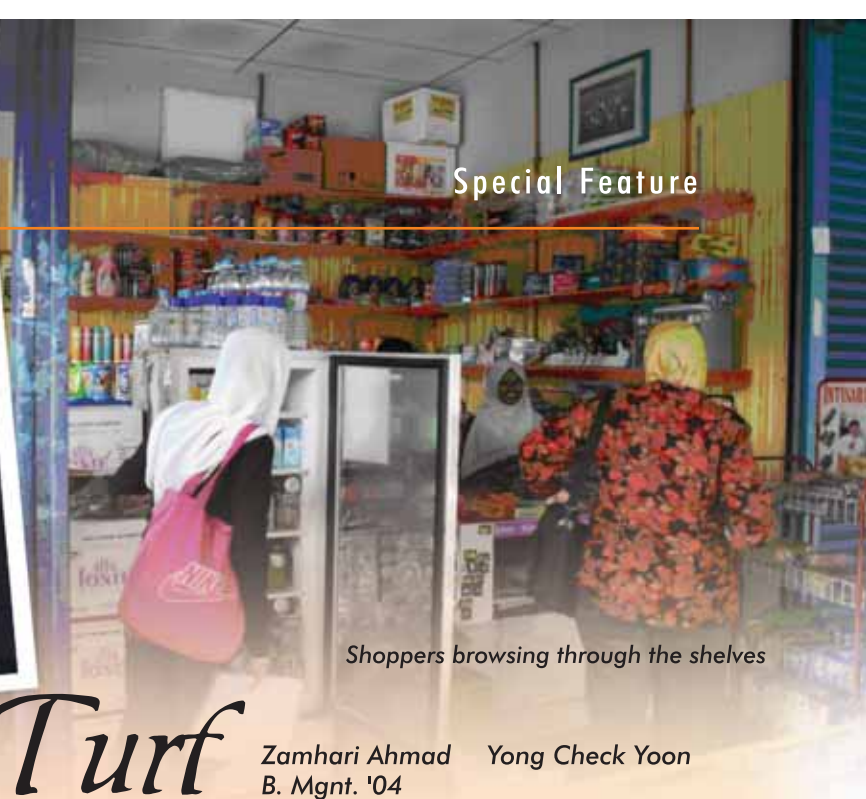
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*Tan showing pictures of his family to The Leader*



A shoplot at the Students' Market



Shoppers browsing through the shelves

# A Different Turf

Zamhari Ahmad    Yong Check Yoon  
B. Mgnt. '04

*Pasar Pelajar* or Students' Market provides an opportunity for enterprising students to venture into business. USM emphasizes on academic excellence and also encourages students to explore their latent talent in running businesses as well. It is here that they learn to plan and run their business with an affordable starting capital.

Established in 1994/1995, the Students Affairs and Development Section (better known as BHEPP) manages the project and is responsible for setting the ground rules for budding entrepreneurs. In order to be qualified, an applicant has to have two to three business partners who provide their own capital, work out a business plan and be able to operate the business from 10am to 5 pm. The monthly rental and maintenance fees of a stall are RM120.

Currently there are nine shop lots available in two sizes - 100 sq. ft. and 200 sq. ft. - of varied businesses, ranging from a food outlet to one that provides photocopying service.

Former co-ordinator of the Students' Market, Encik Mohamed Maliki Mohamed Rapiee, told *The Leader* that students can seek consultation from the BHEPP as how best to operate their business.

"The Students' Market in USM is different from those of other universities because USM does not interfere with the business the students are doing," he said.

Maliki explained that BHEPP allows the young entrepreneurs to have the freedom in running their business the way they see fit.

A student who is interested in operating a business at the Students' Market has to apply to the BHEPP. Selected candidates will be called for an interview and generally the successful candidates will start their businesses during the Second Semester.

Maliki pointed out that the BHEPP offers opportunity for students to participate entrepreneurship development activities at the national level such as the Entrepreneurs' Carnival. "These create business networking and future opportunities when facing competition in the business world," he said.



The facade of Students' Market



A Different Turf

The Students' Market has produced successful entrepreneurs such as Shamsudin Hussin of the Star Craft Enterprise and Muhamad Sani Mustafa from Syarikat Utaragraphic.

The Students' Market opens for business as usual during the Semester Break. They are also permitted to operate during the Convocation and the arrival of the Distant Learning students.

"Business spikes during the Convocation because of the increase in number of visitors to the Universiti," said Maliki.

On the objective of the Students' Market, Maliki said that it provides the students with the opportunity to translate their business plans into action and to manage a partnership venture.

We can regard the Students' Market as a 'swimming pool' for the budding entrepreneurs to dive in because you can never learn to swim without getting your feet wet. And it is proven that given the opportunity, student may discover their hidden talents and this is the opportunity that USM provides to those who dare to venture into the business sector.



## The Dream Builders

Text and Photographs by  
Zamhari Ahmad  
B. Mgnt. '04

They are a unique breed. Some of the USM graduates ended up being successful entrepreneurs and they found their latent talent after giving themselves an opportunity in doing business. Shamsudin Husin and Mohd Azim Shafie are among those who proved their worth besides achieving their intended academic pursuit.

Establishing the Star Craft Enterprise that is located near to the Hilton Hostel on the Campus is certainly not entirely a bed of roses for Shamsudin Husin as he, too, had his share of bad times: suffering an almost devastating loss and also being cheated. "But I learned from these," he quickly added.

Shamsudin pointed out he managed to bounce back because of his experience in business when he worked part-time during his student days.

"Failures do not deter me but instead inspire me to learn from them and strive to avoid pitfalls," he said, surrounded by the shelves and racks stocked of his convenience store.

His first business stint was when he was in a secondary school in Johor and his interest was fired up by the courses conducted by Johor State Economic Development Corporation. But somehow and ironically, he took up a science course when he entered USM. This did not dampen his interest in business.

## The Dream Builders

Armed with the training and knowledge he had, Shamsudin was keen in getting involved in business at the Student's Market. He started to draft out his business plan when he was in Year Two but only got his business up and running a year later.

"We applied to the Student Affairs and Development Division and the bureau staff then guided us along with business training and courses," said Shamsudin.

As required by the Student Affairs and Development Division, there has to be a partnership of three persons and Shamsudin started off partnering with his wife and a friend. Later, his friend decided to break off from the partnership to venture on his own and now he is a photocopy machine dealer in Kelantan.

"Despite breaking off the partnership, our friendship remained very strong with us touching base and still exchanging business experiences," said Shamsudin.

He said that he has to be very careful about operational costs and budget because business slows down during semester breaks but peaks during Convocation or when the Distant Learning students are registered. Star Craft Enterprise only operates for about 8 months during a calendar year.

"When we first started, we operated 24 hours daily but after a year-and-a half, we decided to have it from 8am till 12.30am," he said, reasoning that they observed that there were very few customers after 1am. Star Craft Enterprise sells items such as stationary,



## Special Feature

*Shamsudin's shop assistant busy attending to customer*

toiletries, fast food, buns, drinks and souvenirs and most customers are not desperate enough to patronize at wee hours of the morning, except during examination periods when the students have to burn midnight oil or to take an occasional break from their studies.

When the convenience store first started, it was only stocked with basic consumer items to farm back its start-up capital. It was a trying time for the three partners when setting up the business because they could not obtain loans from any financial institutions because "we did not have any collateral to offer or experience in this line of business".

"We ended investing half of all our savings as our start-up capital and it took us three years to obtain a bank loan," said Shamsudin.

The store engages four permanent employees and a few student helpers. However, on occasions such as Convocations, as many as 20 temporary helpers are needed but Shamsudin added that he has to be careful about keeping the overhead costs below RM12,000 per month during these peak seasons.

He confided that a switch from their science background to managing business was not too helpful because it was a different kettle of fish working in a business concern from running the whole show. But they quickly adapted to the business environment and learned about keeping a proper inventory and an accounting system. Soon, because of the nature of business, they had to deal with more than 100 suppliers.

Shamsudin dispelled the myth that 'graduates are not supposed to involve in retail business'.

*Shamsudin at his shop*





*The Dream Builders*

"This is a common perception but in my opinion, it does not matter what type of business you are in because the challenges you face will be the same," he said.

He added that one can gain much more experience by being a self-employed as compared to a wage earner. One of the experiences he shared is that for every person who ventured into business - no matter how small - it is advisable to get it registered with the

Registrar of Companies and also keep a systematic record of all documents. It is because these will be helpful when you need to apply for a bank loan.

"There are opportunities in running a convenience store business because there is a paradigm shift towards modern sundry business but to succeed, there is a need to develop patience and respect for everyone you deal with and never stop learning," Shamsudin advised.



Another successful entrepreneur Mohd Azim Shafie told *The Leader* that his photocopying business provided him a complete and invaluable experience in the trade. When Azim first announced to his family that he was venturing into photocopying business, his family was surprised but nonetheless supportive of his decision.

"I was in my second year of my course and I had to raise my own start-up capital to acquire a photocopying machine," he said. Azim added that although he is from a family that does business, the nature of the family business is different from his.

It was under such challenging circumstances that the USM's entrepreneurship programme provides him with training and advice. However, as time progresses, he learned that on normal days he can afford to operate from 9.30am to 4.30pm. On most days his shop is managed by hourly paid students and the payment rate is based on their experience.

During the long semester breaks of three months, he would close down his campus outlet and focuses on other business. However, during one-month semester breaks, Azim would open his business earlier and close late - around midnight - to cater for the students from the School of Distance Education who would be on campus.

"During Convocation, I will acquire items such as ice-cream, clothes and drinks as it offers a rare opportunity to earn some profit," he said.

By successfully managing his time and applying what he had learned, he now owns two photocopying machines.

Commenting on why some students had failed in their businesses, Azim said that he believes that they lacked the 'fighting spirit', the faith in their own ability, and a host of other factors.

Azim confided that he hopes to establish a new outlet. "I would certainly be keen to continue doing business because the returns are satisfying and they compensate the long and irregular working hours," he said. His advice to a budding business person is to "conduct market research about the business first, have self-confidence and capitalize all available opportunities".

The success stories such as those of Azim and Shamsudin involve 99 per cent perspiration but nonetheless an inspiration to others.



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# K.A.S.H.

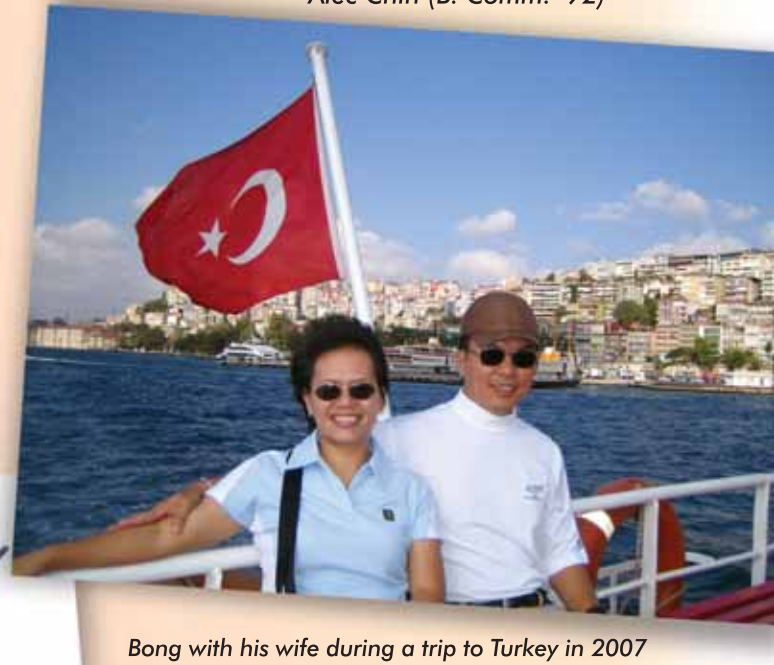
*Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, Habit*

Alec Chin (B. Comm. '92)

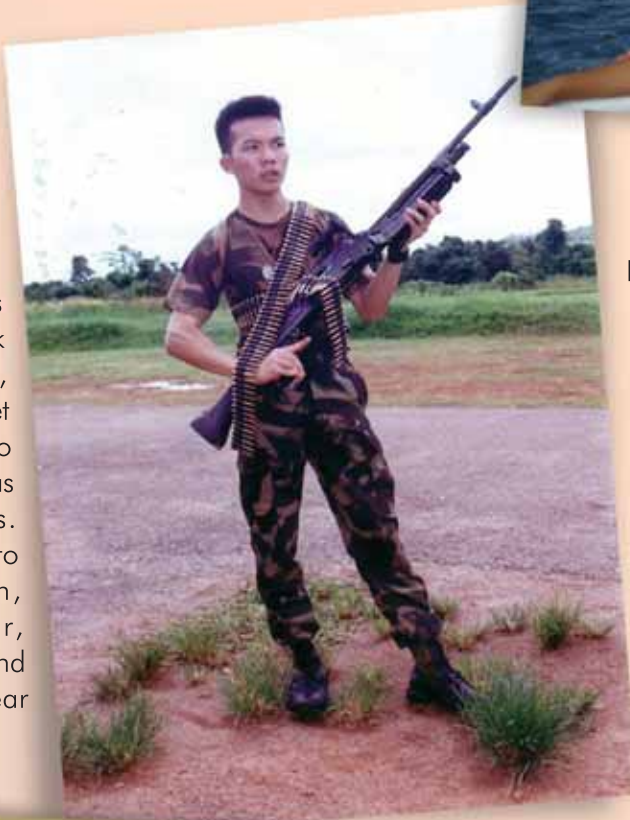
Call it pipe dream if you want but to Johnny Bong owning a business and gaining financial independence to live the life of his choice has always been his dream. "I'd like to retire young, travel around the world and do things of my own choice," Bong confided. However, it was a dream not uncommon among young people with a 'fire in their belly'.

A graduate from the School of Social Sciences, Bong chanced upon a business opportunity introduced by a friend and made a courageous decision to quit his fixed-income job to establish a company. That was in 1997, a year that saw the world besieged by financial crisis and economic woes. It was a bold move for Bong. With determination and perseverance, he has never looked back since.

Today, his Penang-based company, Main Stream Consultancy and Services Sdn. Bhd., stands tall in providing financial planning services such as risk management, investment and asset distribution to individuals as well as corporate clients. His business is set to expand to Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Sabah and Sarawak in the near future.



*Bong with his wife during a trip to Turkey in 2007*



*Cadet training during campus days sharpen Bong's leadership skill*

Bong, a Certified Financial Planner, is passionate about educating the public on the importance of financial planning. "I'll continue to share my knowledge on financial planning and encourage the public to start saving while they're young. It's important to plan wisely," said Bong.

His words of advise for aspiring business people, "If you want to succeed in business, you must have KASH (Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, Habit). Continue to learn and acquire new skills while inculcating the right attitude and habits. These are the vital ingredients for success. It is evident that KASH worked for him, indeed very well.

*Bong at his office in Penang*



Alec Chin is currently a designer and founder of Timur Communication. He can be reached at [alec@timurcomm.com](mailto:alec@timurcomm.com)



"It all started when I was captivated by the fashion accessories sold in a shop in Hong Kong. There were many unique creative designs and the quality was excellent," said Tam Poh Poh.

The visit to Hong Kong inspired her to switch from pursuing a career of a chemistry graduate to plunge into the business industry. With her experience that she gained while working with industries like e-learning, organic foods and fashion accessories, she decided to start of her own business to challenge herself and to explore her potential.

## ACCESSORIES TO SUCCESS

*Sharifah Darweena Syed Ahmad Amir Feisal*  
B. Sc. '07

*Yong Check Yoon*



*Tam during the interview with The Leader*

Tam was a picture of contentment during the interview with *The Leader* as she revealed that her decision to go into business was partly because of her love to meet people. With a keen business acumen, she penetrated the fashion accessory market. Her business flourished within two years.

*Tam's products showcased in an exhibition in Metrojaya shopping mall*



## Accessories to Success

"To start a business, make sure that you find something that involves low risk, particularly those who have a limited capital," she advised.

With her unflagging 'dare to fail' spirit, her fashion accessories under the brand name Amore Closet are available at Parkson, Kuala Lumpur, and she had been invited by Metrojaya on various occasions to participate in its fashion accessories roadshows.

In venturing into business, Tam suggested that homework has to be done first. "Identify your interest and know your niche. Do not copy others. I love fashion accessories and also to collect those with unique design. It was just my luck to discover the shop in Hong Kong that sell and supply the products," said Tam.

With good time management and her efforts to challenge herself, her next move is to move into the Food and Beverage (F&B) business. While Tam was working for the company that distributed the organic vinegar before she started out on her own, she had learnt details about import and export. That knowledge became invaluable when she had to deal with shipping companies. She also learned to deal with people from the media. Tam was once interviewed for an hour over the AiFM (a Chinese radio station under RTM) channel during which she talked about her plans to sell organic vinegar drink.

Tam conceded that it is risky to operate a F&B business but gaining the experience in this new area of business is invaluable. She explained that the business concept is to serve organic vinegar as a health drink to go along with healthy food. "It will create a niche by itself," she said, however, adding that she has no intention to expand it at this moment.



Some of the **Amore Closet** products

*"Identify your interest and know your niche. Do not copy others..."*

- Tam Poh Poh

"I would rather focus on penetrating the market and I have so far organised seven roadshows to promote the organic vinegar single-handedly," she explained.

Currently she is planning to market her *Amore Closet* fashion accessories through the internet while strategizing the opening of the Organic Vinegar Restaurant.

"If you really want to start a business, do not be afraid to fail. Work on your selling skills to improve your customer service and enrich your experience by working with others," Tam said in concluding the 90-minute interview. I have no doubt about her as she had succeeded in transforming herself from one with 'zero experience'.



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Shaiful at home in Taman Tunku, Kuala Lumpur, after work

## From (shrimp) Chips to (computer) Chips

Peggie Ng  
B. A. '86

Yong Check Yoon

A pair of branded white shoes was Shaiful's first taste of sweet success in doing business. That was during his secondary school days and the business was selling Hari Raya cards.

From then on, there were many more business ventures that he ventured into and they included selling T-Shirts with slogan, textile, electronics and souvenirs items to friends and acquaintances. Later during USM days, Shaiful acquired an ailing burger business and ran it at the campus back gate with some friends. The fruit of this undertaking was a secondhand Mini that transported him around Minden campus in his final year.

Shaiful's love affair with entrepreneurship continued at the fringe. He recalled zipping around with fellow alumnus Achmed Ismail in the Mini, piled to the roof with *keropok* (chips that are usually made from shrimps) they bought from Johor for distribution to outlets in the Klang Valley. It progressed to investing in a sundryshop business, properties, land and other forms of businesses whilst he charted an ICT career path with the multinational companies (MNCs).

It was after Cisco, a company specialising in networking and communications technology, in 2001 and at the age of 43 that Shaiful's full-time entrepreneurship kicked off. Frontline, Frontech, Comprenur and Cosmoscape were established under the Frontline group of companies funded by two Angel investors to tap into various fields of ICT and consultancy-related businesses in Malaysia, the ASEAN and the Middle East. An Angel investor is an affluent individual who provides capital for a business start-up, usually in exchange for convertible debt or ownership equity.

As opportunity presented itself, Shaiful added DBORA, Pritchett Malaysia and Gamat Emas to his investment portfolio while he also hold a position and some equity in G-TEK Electronics and sits on the Board of public listed companies - RedTone and eBCap.

To him, working for the MNCs and for his own business have been equally demanding and rewarding. The taste of success and self-actualization comes with growing with the MNCs and cultivating his own business.

"In an MNC you have to justify hard to justify your funding. However, as an entrepreneur, sometimes all it takes is the funder's belief in you as I first discovered in my Raya card venture," Shaiful said.

He had two Angel investors to support his Raya card venture. "There was no paper work involved!" he mused and remarked that the investors' belief in you do not come with *karma*. He said, "You have to earn it."

What are his thoughts about being an entrepreneur? "Honestly, the fruits of entrepreneuring - no matter what the size - are sweeter ... for me!" he says.

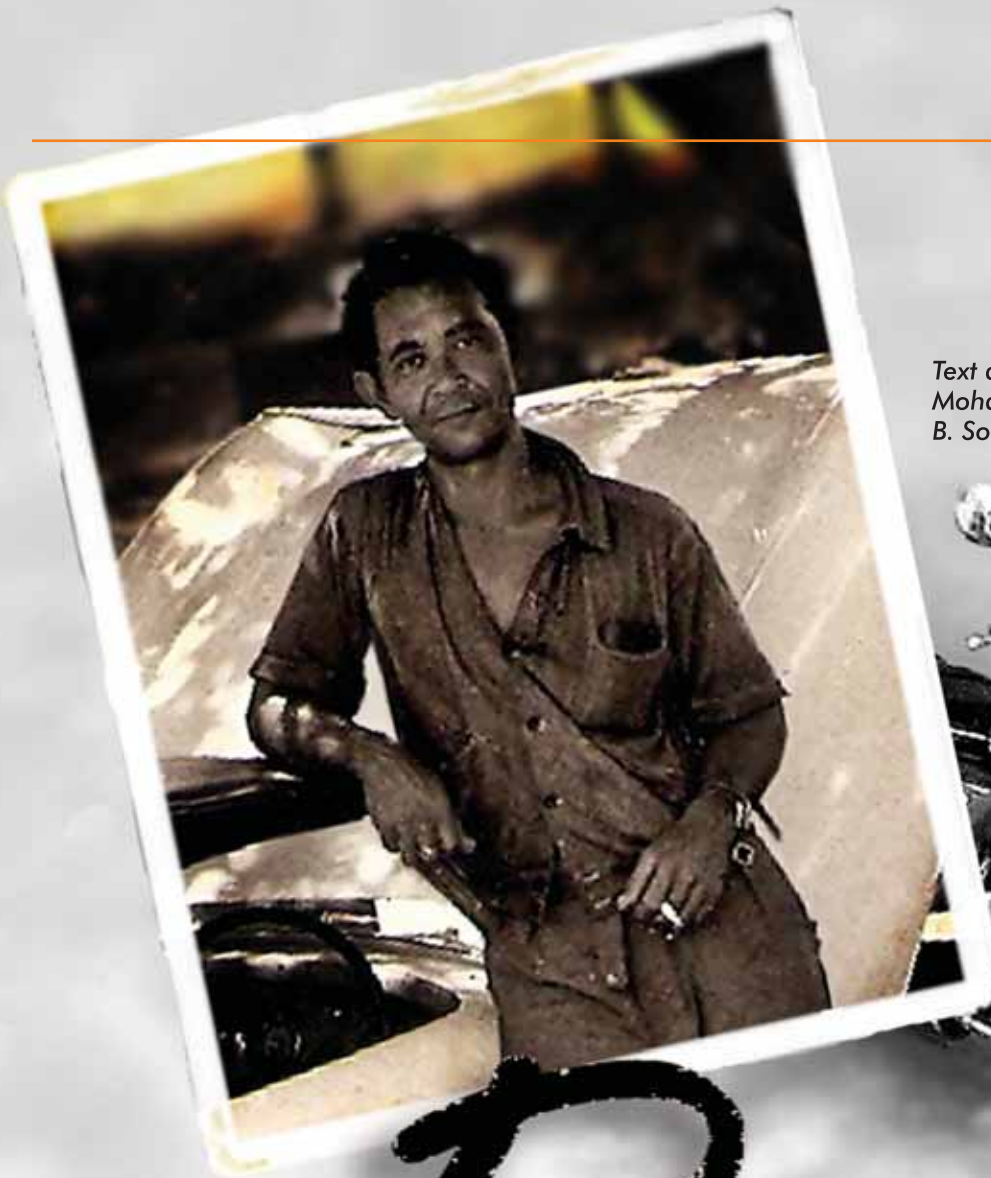


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Artwork by Mohamed Talhah Idrus



Text and Photograph by  
Mohamed Talhah Idrus  
B. Soc. Sc. '74



# Pak Kob

He came to campus regularly but he did not go to classes or the office, unlike other members of the campus community. Instead he would be found crouching near a broken-down motorcycle, often near the Batu Uban gate (Minden Gate to most senior alumni). He is **Yaakob bin Puteh**, a mechanic who is more popularly known as **Pak Kob**.

Pak Kob started out as a teenage fisherman before joining the navy as a cook. In 1950, he joined the British army in Singapore and served with its engineering corps. By the time he moved on to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in 1959 in Gelugor, he was already a second engineer.





*Pak Kob and Man in their flooded workshop sometime in 1973 (Photograph by Yunus Omar)*

Pak Kob's career in uniform ended when the RAAF contingent left for Australia in 1969. The Australians were so appreciative of him that they "presented" him with much of their machinery and tools, some were so high-tech that he could not put to good use. These tools proved handy and helped to shape Pak Kob's next career as a motorcycle mechanic.

students led a care-free life to the extent of not even bothering to have a licence (for some at least). If there was a hiccup, they counted on Pak Kob to nurse their bikes back to health. Should his lecture become extended, the students would try to distract him by switching topic to politics or entertainment.

Universiti Pulau Pinang (UPP) was just being established round this time and Pak Kob slowly found customers among its students who were staying in Gelugor. When UPP fully occupied the present-day Minden campus, his crouching posture beside a motorcycle became as familiar a sight as any other student activity.



*Pak Kob's son, Man, who regularly accompanied him on his mission (Photograph courtesy of Zolkifli)*

He was nevertheless a communicator. Student bikers found it easy to strike up a conversation with him. In fact some took advantage of him, often borrowing from him Malaysian \$2.00 (the dollar was a precursor to the Ringgit) for petrol.


*Pak Kob (left) and Man (right) at his Gelugor workshop (Photograph courtesy of Zolkifli)*

He was about the only person trusted by campus bike riders to come to their rescue when their machines played up on them. Many would heave a sigh of relief upon seeing Pak Kob accompanied by his son, Man (real name, Abdul Rahman) and his ever faithful workman's toolbox, coming to repair the ailing machine on site.




A number of bikers did not really take care of their bikes, occasionally prompting Pak Kob to give the owner a mini-lecture on bike care. Well, back then,





A number of these grateful alumni still keep in touch with him, coming to his house for lunch, whenever they are back in Penang. Pak Kob too still remembers many of them. Though some names escape him nowadays, I could recognise those contemporaries by his descriptions of them or their girlfriends!

He would be often found patiently fixing a puncture which cost \$1.00 or changing spark plugs (costing 50 cents each). An oil change carried a charge of only \$2.50 or \$3.00. Still some students could not cough out the amount and instead surrendered their identity cards for his 'safe-keeping' in lieu of a settlement later. However, Pak Kob usually dismissed their collaterals, instead asking them to pay whenever they can. Many still do not!



Pak Kob's own workshop was under a *sena* (angsan) tree in Gelugor (where *Dewan Serbaguna* now stands), a few hundred meters from the gate. So a student whose motorcycle suddenly spluttered while on the way to the campus would feel self-assured that help was just a "push" away. More conveniently they would have Pak Kob come to campus. Once he was called to repair a bike whose owner's oil tank was filled with *Brasso* (metal polish) by an anonymous "enemy"!

*Zolkifli, Pak Kob's eldest child helped Pak Kob to recall his days as a mechanic*

Pak Kob operated without even a phone number (a fixed line then). Communication was done face-to-face. Yet students and outsiders communicated effectively with him thus extending a bond of friendship beyond university fences, long before the 'university and its community' became a common catch phrase.

His personality and communication style prompted students to call him "Pak" (which literally means "father", but culturally a reverence for a peer of one's parents)



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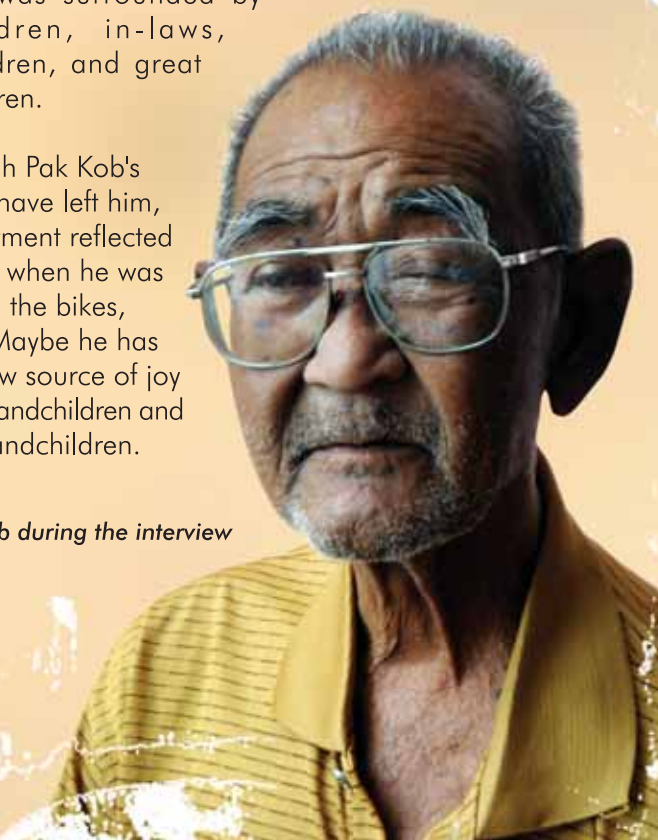
Kob, while he usually addressed them as *hang* (pronounced "hung" in colloquial Bahasa Melayu), a pronoun saliently denoting a position of seniority; at least the usage shows that one is not in any way intimidated by the other person. Both students and Pak Kob were comfortable with these "endearments" in addressing one another. To many students, especially bikers, he was a fatherly figure. He could be depended upon to come to their aid in times of dire transportation need.

In the early 1980s he ventured into contracting, while opening a repair shop in Gelugor. As his contracting schedules got more hectic, he sold off the shop in 1989, thus ending his days as a mechanic.

Though long retired, he still recalls with fondness his regular customers notably Shaari and Che' Wa Pei, Mat Sin, Ho Kee Ping, Bung Selamat, and (Dato') Zainol Abidin and many others.

Now at 76 years old, the man who impressed me with his fitness and strong hands is now thin and seemed tired. We conducted our conversation in the basement of the Tekun hostel, for he was too tired to climb a flight of steps to the apartment of his son Zolkifli (B. Soc. Sc. '94). Zolkifli helped with the interview since Pak Kob's once raspy voice is now barely audible. During the interview, Pak Kob was surrounded by his children, in-laws, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Even though Pak Kob's customers have left him, the contentment reflected in his eyes, when he was working on the bikes, remains. Maybe he has found a new source of joy in his 24 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.



*Pak Kob during the interview*



## What Say They...

# what say they

*The Leader*, a vital piece of the USM pie

The Alumni Liaison Office of Universiti Sains Malaysia, was built in earnest-early 2001 with euphoria. Gilded with a vision to burn-build closer ties between USM and her graduates, it sprouted *The Leader* magazine.

*The Leader* is decoratively-designed, to extensively-extend alma mater developments to USM alumni members, in a strive to meet-meet this vigor-vision.

The fickle-first edition of this magazine... was launched on November 26 2006. *The Leader*, a USM alumni magazine, is brick-bridged in English, and... it is scheduled to be released tribe-trice a year.

With a mission to tie,  
*The Leader* is a piece of the pie.  
A vital piece to bridge the USM tie.

DEVEN of USM

Overall it looks nice and highly presentable, suitable as a University's corporate momento to visitors. Contents wise, some of the articles stretch too far...like *The Other Residents*, you have to reconsider the relevance and significance in bridging the alumni. Furthermore, I feel that it had overshadowed the other articles. Article like 'A Passion to Inspire' is good to highlight alumni's contribution to the society. If possible, please highlight more on the current alumni, instead of the 70's batch only.

MOHD. ZULKARNAIN BIN MOHAMED TAJULARIFIN  
B. Sc. (Computer) '01 - UTM

I read through the latest edition of *The Leader* last night. You guys did a real fantastic job, especially on Tabula Rasa. Many people don't realise how much effort has to be put in to produce that. Once again double thumbs up to the editorial team. In my opinion, one article that would be interesting is 'Minden Motorbikes'. But, we need some photos for that. I think we can solicit from the 70's gang especially Bang Romlee who was our campus mechanics.

ZUBIR BIN HAJI DIN  
B. Sc. (Bio/Physic) '74

I have just received a copy of *The Leader* Vol 2 No. 3 Oct 2007 this morning. Congratulations on the excellent write-up on "A Tunku on The Tunku". Thanks.

TUNKU DATO' ISMAIL JEWLA

Most of the articles sound like 'personal outburst' instead of factual, meaning the writer tend to put in too much personal details instead of factual information of the topics. Can we have more articles focus on relics, buildings especially the transformation - past and present? The article 'Rock d'Amour No More' is fantastic and easy to read. Meanwhile, I notice the covers become nicer and nicer, good work!

MELINDA HOI YOKE ENG  
B. Soc. Sc. '92

Talking about the latest edition of *The Leader*... it's unbelievably fantastic. I smiled all the way through, while reading it. It is truly an amusing 'product' of USM.

LIS SAFINA ISMAIL  
B. Sc. (Ind. Tech./QCI) '04

Personally, I feel that *The Leader* is short of career information. For example how the successful alumni share their personal experiences in life and how they started their career after graduated.

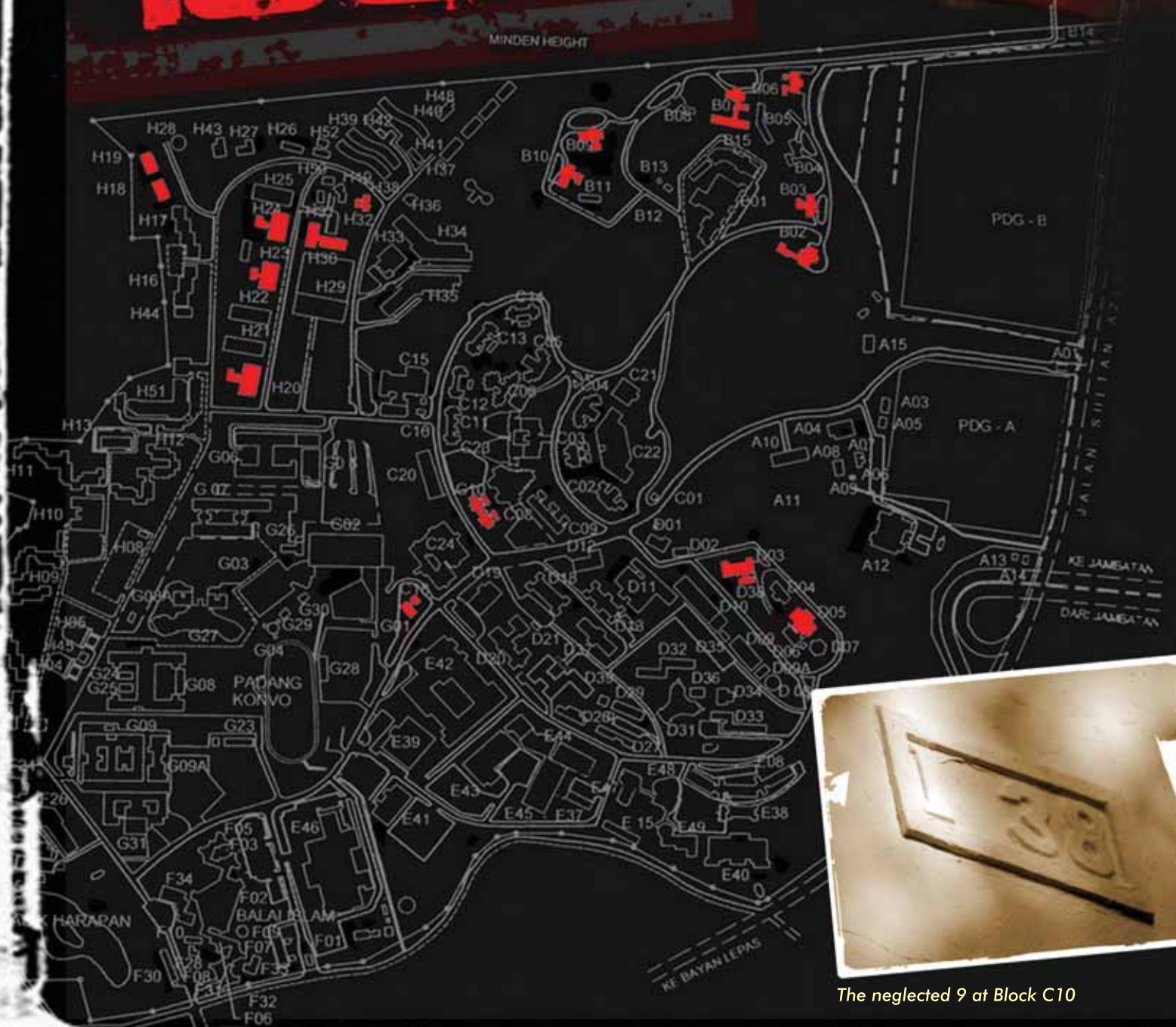
ANDERSON  
2nd Year, Social Sciences



# the MARK of 1938

Text and Photography by  
Rusly Jamaludin

Artwork by Rusly Jamaludin



The neglected 9 at Block C10



(2)  
Building D03 - The former N.A.A.F.I. (Navy, Army and Air Force Institution) canteen and Corporals' Mess which presently houses the Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS). Photograph taken from www.mindenbarrack.com

The Minden campus still delights in retaining contact with its past, and adoringly maintains its humble history. Many first-time visitors (and probably uninformed readers) tend to dismiss the campus as little more than one vast 'military open-air museum'. It was once a busy army establishment and has more than its fair share of colonial buildings which bears the vintage mark of '1938'. The 'long operating history' speaks for itself and the small advertisement's attraction is the only charm of antiquity; there is little to delight the eye, though the '1938' might perhaps be regarded as *de rigueur* of the day.

While all this may be true, it is not to say that the campus is without buildings of architectural merit or historical interest. There are not a great number of distinctive landmarks, true, but the campus is a place which repays the leisure stroller, for there is a great deal of fascination to be found in the old buildings which have survived amid the rapid development of USM. Unpretentious as it may be, the quaint sign of '1938' still boasts of being the oldest surviving 'hallmark' in the campus. It is a *tour de force*.

Notably, there are about seventeen remaining '1938' besides a pair each of vintage '1939' and '1941' buildings, 'WON2' as well as 'WON3' (both acronyms refer to 'War Office No.2 and War Office No.3). The date itself puzzles anyone who sees it. So far there are no historical provenances for what exactly the intended date signifies. But what is certain, the date was used as an identification marker for work completion. Consequently, the visual mark of '1938' is believed to be the 'first batch' construction of early Minden Barrack Architecture.

The **1938 markers** exhibit clear-cut *bas-relief* design incorporating modest typeface, all horizontally placed within the not-so-distinguished one and a half-inch thick plain decorative border making it an instantly-identifiable architectural adornment of the building façade

The era of '1938' up to 1969 was indeed the ages that brought the handsome production of buildings of the campus and they have left an ineffaceable visual impression to its inhabitants.

Building B03 – *Rumah Pemimpin*, exuberant as ever



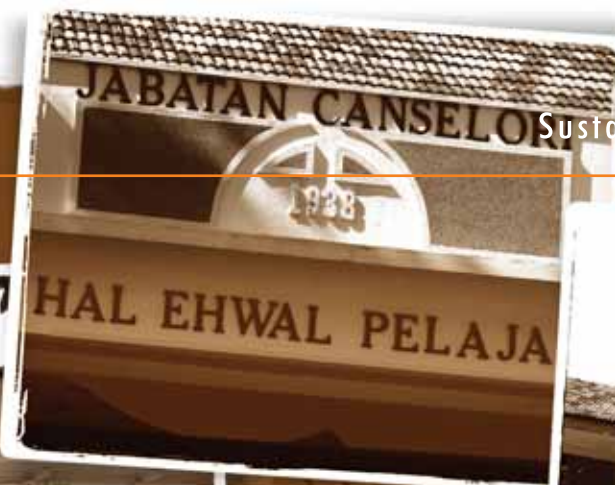
Building B10 – the residence of the Director of Pusat Keselamatan (Security Centre)



Building B06 – The Guest House is enjoying a significant rejuvenation



The Mark of 1938



Building D05 - The old  
chancellery and now the  
Student Affairs Department



Building B09- A quaint **Lorong Pegawai** bungalow in its solitary splendor

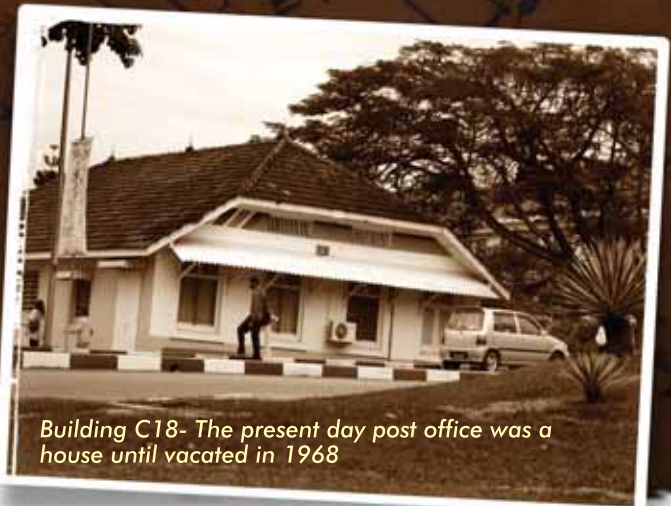
Building B07- Guest House Cafe

Veteran 'Aa-Ah' nicknamed as 'Three Dog Night' by pioneering peers, splendidly described the marks of '1938'. He was 12 then back in 1960's, while idling along the boundary barbwire in the nature-bound haven of Helen Brown Estates (now Minden Heights) and the gated army community, where he struck his first 'wows' of the conspicuous '1938'. The vivid descriptions show its lucid setting in an environment that conveys at least an impression of its isolated grandeur.

"In the 60's the barracks were predominantly white-washed monochrome toned rendering. The fresh scents of greenery and the otherworldly silence would be sufficient to put me in ecstasy. I know of no sight which could arouse in me the feeling of excitement. These sprawling brilliant plumed egret-white bungalows dated '1938' is how I shall always remember and truly bear to heart."

Based on British D.W.O Malaya (A.M.I.C.E) drawing record bear no.126/1963/1 illustrates rich existence of Barrack structures. These sturdy constructions have a distinct feature which gives the campus its shape, identity and luxury that contemporary campus buildings cannot exude.


It is believed that scores of nondescript buildings bearing '1938' marker found along 'E' Zone belt, had been demolished in the name of progress. As a matter of fact, the Globe theater cinema, the old Physics and Medical Laboratories, the first Development Office cum Workshop, Students' Recreation/TV Room, Students' Music Room, the old School of HBP workshop, all of which had been dearly missed. The only building left with its marker intact in this zone is the Post Office. Traces of the old *Unit Pembelajaran* which was formerly School of HBP administrative office where Wijaya Arts Centre now located, still stand but the '1938' sign 'disappeared' during renovation.



Building C18- The present day post office was a house until vacated in 1968



## The Mark of 1938



The hallmark has indeed stood the test of time. Although the outlook may not be exactly like the bygone ages, but the original glory and spirit was the same. To some, they represent as undervalued kitsch, but these garish 'marks' are undeniably eye-catching tribute of the Minden Barracks achievements. Again and again, those who know and care for the 'sign of life' speak of the importance of preserving it. Without doubt, the modest hallmark has left a deep impression of awe and reverence within the soul of the campus.

These remaining '1938' markers should be considered as part of the campus' wealth and heritage. We should be encouraged to preserve, and make do of what we have. There has been a chain reaction of 'disappearance', not so much because we are ignorant but because we are wasteful. While *The Leader* does not want to overreact, there is clearly good reason to be alarmed about the future. The least all of us can do is to take stock of what is remaining - and it can be seen and measured - and decide whether this is really the inheritance we want to hand on to the next generation with pride and satisfaction.

## The remaining '1938' markers

1938 Building No.	Current Building Use	Previous Military Establishment
C10	School of Communication	Army Quarters
C18	Post Office	Army Quarters
B10	USM Officer's Residential Bungalow	Officers' Quarters
B09	USM Officer's Residential Bungalow	Officers' Quarters
B07	Guest House Café	Officers' Quarters
B06	Guest House	Officers' Quarters
B03	<i>Rumah Pemimpin</i>	Officers' Quarters
B02	Vice-Chancellor's Residence	Officers' Quarters
D03	Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS)	N.A.A.F.I. canteen and Corporals' Mess
D05	Student Affairs (The Old Vice Chancellors' Office)	Warrant Officer's & Sergeants' Mess
H20	<i>Desasiswa Cahaya</i> (Students' Hostel)	British Army Children's (BAC) School
H23	<i>Desasiswa Cahaya</i> (Students' Hostel)	British Army Children's (BAC) School
H24	<i>Desasiswa Cahaya</i> (Students' Hostel)	Army Barrack block
H18	USM Officer's Quarters	Army Quarters
H19	USM Officer's Quarters	Army Quarters
H30	<i>Hadanah Pusat Islam</i>	Supply Point Office / Barrack
H32	<i>Hadanah Pusat Islam</i>	British Army Guard Room



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Staff and students gathered at the Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra on 11 January 2008 for the Vice-Chancellor's annual address which traced the achievements of the university during the past year and set the strategy for the course of action to be undertaken in 2008. The two-hour address, punctuated by important quotes and illustrative diagrams, captured the attention of the audience with its inspiring theme - **We Lead: Reaching for the Stars, Striving for the Apex**. These are no idle words considering Universiti Sains Malaysia was adjudged the best overall university among IPTAs in the Academic Reputation Survey 2006 having scored 'excellent' in several sub-sectors, one of which (of particular pride to alumni members) being the university of choice for students.

# Transforming Today for Tomorrow

Dzulkifli Abdul Razak  
B. Pharmacy '76





*The Vice-Chancellor being welcomed by the audience before delivering his speech*

Commencing with the National Higher Education Strategy which laid emphasis on widening access and lifelong education aimed at expanding human capital, Professor Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak highlighted special events of 2007 such as the 40th anniversary of laying the foundation stone of University College Penang, installation of the 4th Chancellor, formal designation of USM as a research-intensive university and (an event certain to invoke nostalgia among alumni) the ground breaking for the USM Alumni Clubhouse. USM's score card included the many international conferences that were successfully hosted like the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Executive Council, Global Higher Education Forum 2007, elected president of ASAIHL and as a member to the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Education Advisory Hub. As in the previous years, USM also received winning accolades at both national and international Research and Development (R & D) expositions and secured numerous student-related awards.

In the wake of the above achievements, Dato' Dzulkifli indicated that the University is feverishly embarking on many more new initiatives in consonance with its recently accorded status as a Research-intensive University (RU) and also streamlining the campus-wide empowerment process (thanks to alumnus Zukifli Hitam for his guidance) to enhance its delivery system

within provisions of the revised governance in the university's constitution. Research intensification is being given a timely shot in the arm using the special RU funding from the government and the setting-up of the Research Governing Committee (RGC) and Research Trust Committee (RTC) which will ensure a systematic implementation of projects to achieve the targeted key performance indicators (KPIs).

Notably, in a move to propel research to a higher portal, a 12.4 hectare site in Bukit Jambul (15 minutes drive from the Minden campus) has been acquired at a cost of RM59 million for the purpose of creating the USM Science and Arts Innovation Space (SAINS, for short). Although SAINS would primarily focus on innovative research in Biotechnology and Nanotechnology, *The Leader* understands it would not be to the exclusion of R & D work in the Arts (where viable, such as the creation of arts colony in SAINS) so as to provide for a balanced and sustainable knowledge development. This unique approach is deemed to be the first in the country and the region. Apart from physical infrastructure, expanding the pool of human expertise is being addressed vide the introduction of the Vice-Chancellor awards for graduate students and improved incentives for post-doctoral candidates so as to tap local and overseas talent to spearhead research in various fields.

Interestingly with the conferment of RU status, USM (as the case with three other public universities in this new found category) has been allocated a fourth Deputy Vice-Chancellor's portfolio since September 2007, with the specific objective to develop a vibrant Industry & Community Network. This portfolio is responsible for engaging closely with industry and the community by matching the expertise, facilities and available resources of the University to the needs and aspirations of the parties concerned. In this context, the University hopes to contribute towards sustainable social development and economic transformation of the northern region of Peninsular Malaysia taking cognisance of the priorities enunciated by the government under the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) proposals inter alia a similar



A slide encapsulating the Vice-Chancellor's speech

role to complement the East Coast Economic Region (ECER) development is also being contemplated considering its Health Campus is located in Kubang Kerian, Kelantan.

The Vice-Chancellor then unveiled USM's **Transformation Framework** which requires the strengthening of the 5 institutional pillars viz. governance; leadership; academia; teaching & learning; and research & development towards fulfilling the national aspiration of producing human capital with first class mentality. In line with changes taking place, the Board of Directors has accordingly supplanted the previous University Council whilst university management will now be expected to meet set targets and monitored as well as appraised based on key performance indicators. Among the many criteria, the government expects the university sector to be more proactive in collaborating with multinational corporations and international agencies to foster staff exchange, joint research, attachments and training, etc. There is emphasis on more holistic education eg. teaching delivery now to concentrate on active and problem-based learning, exposing science-based students to elective subjects in the humanities (which has been the mainstay of USM's academic programme since its inception) and vice versa. Research being the life blood of universities, USM will be intensifying

its academic training schemes to increase the output of researchers, scientists and engineers to meet the country's industrial expansion and to facilitate its movement up the value chain.

As the country progressed from a resourced-based economy to one that is knowledge-driven, innovation holds the key in Malaysia's macro-economic development and national competitiveness. However Malaysia's capacity for and success in technology development remains low and its many research institutes thus far have not displayed a high commercialisation success rate. Ways and means have to be found to bridge the gap between technology-driven innovation and market-driven innovation to promote the creation of jobs and wealth in a sustainable way.

The Vice-Chancellor shared his thoughts on the challenges of globalisation and the growing competition among the best universities in the world to attract the best talent, be it students or top scientists. This gives rise to a lop-sided situation since developing countries (with inadequate facilities and offering lesser remuneration) cannot hope to compete directly with resource-rich industrialised nations which far outspend the former in research. It is thus not surprising that developed countries continue to make leaps and



bounds in science and invention and, in the process, entice precious human resource from the developing world (where they are most needed to make an impact) for employment in the rich countries. This necessitates our universities to respond by developing local strength and competencies and making cost-effective use of RU funding to upgrade teaching-learning and R & D facilities to retain relevant talent.

The address moves towards its conclusion by balancing today's reality against tomorrow's scenarios, listing the tangibles as well as defining the intangibles and how these factor into the transformation road map intended to pave the way for raising the capacity for knowledge, innovation and nurturing the first class mentality. The USM leap to the future is envisaged

to be anchored along five (5) thrusts, namely embracing sustainability, developing a brain-mind nexus, enhancing innovation, deepening the values of localisation, and finally expediting a transformational change as USM celebrates its 40 years of excellence in education. The transformation strategy, successfully implemented, is the recipe to arm USM with the ingredients for traversing the next critical threshold in the university's journey to greater heights viz. satisfying the criteria to be recognised an Apex University! It may not quite be the same as literally reaching the stars but certainly we can hold our heads up high as having arrived at the summit of academia, at least in the Asia/Pacific region.

### A poser for USM Alumni

Dear readers, the Hon. Vice-Chancellor has provided an important insight and set the path for the University's Transformation Plan (see, <http://www.usm.my/v3/> for the slide presentation under *Perutusan Tahunan Naib Canselor 2008*).

How does the above impinge upon Alumni? What role can they play in support of the alma mater?

*The Leader* feels alumni holding appropriate positions in the public and private sectors can help play the **push factor** in exploring collaboration and networking between USM and their respective organisations to pursue joint research (where such opportunities entail taking on a university partner) or associate the university in a worthwhile community-relations project undertaken by their company. Such action will raise the profile of the university, in terms of determining institutional rankings and fostering ties, under the aegis of the "University and its community" and certainly confer mutual benefit to the parties concerned.

#### **Some examples of how Alumni can contribute or influence an action**

Research, innovation and graduate quality - The university has established a campus wide Industry Advisory Panel since 2007 and senior representatives from companies (a number of whom are prominent alumni) provide valuable advice/recommendations to fine-tune the various degree programmes to closer meet the expectations and needs of industry. This is one assured way for the university to get a reliable feel of the pulse of industry when charting new directions of its programmes.

Industrial training - USM welcomes opportunities to expose students to the "real working environment" thus enhancing their employment marketability later on.

Reverse sabbatical - Mechanism for industry specialists to spend a specific period in the university to work alongside academic staff to undertake research in pursuit of product innovation.

*The Leader* welcomes feedback and constructive comments from members. Let us hear from you at [usmalumni@yahoogroups.com](mailto:usmalumni@yahoogroups.com)



Prof. Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak is currently the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia. He can be reached at [vc@notes.usm.my](mailto:vc@notes.usm.my)

Photographs courtesy of Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia [PTPM], USM

**"Whatever the mind  
of man can conceive  
and believe, it can  
achieve!"**

*Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor,  
Malaysia's first **angkasawan***

# MUSZAPHAR'S FIERY MISSION: BEFORE AND AFTER

*Asha Suresh Chand  
B. Pharmacy '92*

"It felt like a great pressure on the chest. I would describe it like an elephant stepping on your chest ... totally uncomfortable and suffocating," *angkasawan* (cosmonaut) Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor told *The Leader* as he described the toughest part of his 11-day mission in space.

This was during ballistic re-entry in the Soyuz TMA-10 capsule that transported him together with two other Russian cosmonauts, landing in remote Kazakhstan on 20 October 2007. As the space capsule from the International Space Station (ISS) entered Earth's atmosphere, air friction caused the capsule to heat up to a staggering 8,700 degrees Celsius!

Malaysia's first *angkasawan* Muszaphar was on a one-day visit to USM on 5 January at the invitation of the Resident's Council, *Desasiswa Indah-Kembara*, USM Student Affairs and Development Division. USM was the first university he visited during his nationwide tour under the aegis of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.



*Asha getting an exclusive from Dr. Muszaphar*



The forum at Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra was packed with more than 3,000 participants, including Vice-Chancellor Prof Dato' Dzulkipli Abdul Razak, staff members and students.

On the preparations leading up to the space flight, the *angkasawan* reminisced having to train in sea survival in the Black Sea in the Ukraine. They were trained in the Soyuz for three hours where the weather was very hot while it was cold in the spacecraft. The gruelling demands of the training did not dent Muszaphar's resolve as he has this dream to reach for space even as a child.



"I have this dream since I was 10 years-old and it took me 25 years to achieve it. Dreams are possible. I try to reach out to everyone out there ... if I can do it, they can too," he said. Muszaphar added that the view was simply amazing when looking down at Earth from orbit and one could not avoid being filled with awe at the vastness of space.

While on board the ISS, he performed experiments in connection with the characteristics and growth of liver cancer and leukaemia cells, the crystallisation of various proteins and microbe under the rigours of space. The experiments were a success and they might open up new frontiers for medical research in the country.

Muszaphar pointed out that going into space is not a greater obstacle than returning to change the mindset

of the younger generation. "I just want to tell them to believe in themselves and keep their dreams aglow because they can certainly realise their dreams," said the 35 year-old suave orthopaedic surgeon.

With the nine days in the ISS preoccupied with important scientific experiments, it was a tremendous achievement for him and a quantum leap for the 'Malaysia Boleh' spirit. Since his return, Muszaphar has been skyrocketed to national hero status by a large following of admirers and fans but he still has his feet planted on the ground, unfazed by the mob of fans or his success.



Asha Suresh Chand is currently a pharmacist. She can be reached at [asha.theva@gmail.com](mailto:asha.theva@gmail.com)

### MINDEN DIARIES 2008

	Activity	Venue
<b>MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Career and Education Expo (EKSPEN) 2008</li> <li>- 37th USM Convocation</li> <li>- Alumni Association AGM</li> </ul>	Main Campus Main Campus Main Campus
<b>MAY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Orientation (School of Distance Education)</li> </ul>	Main Campus
<b>JUNE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alumni House Grand Opening</li> </ul>	Alumni House
<b>JULY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orientation for Full-Time Students</li> </ul>	Main Campus



*A praying mantis playing peek-a-boo*



They are everywhere, and they entertain. From minute bugs to busy squirrels, the other residents are often amusing to watch. Small as most of them are, they are big in acts.

As one watch these other residents, one can be amazed at how they suddenly develop personalities as they move about, lift a foot or just nose around. Suddenly they have individualities. From the human perspective, their ordinary acts can seem to be excruciatingly burdensome and arduous.

*Text and Photographs by  
Mohamed Talhah Idrus  
B. Soc. Sc. '74*

# SUMMERS & Acrobats

Acrobats and Clowns



*An ant taking the spotlight with a Michael Jackson's moonwalk*

Almost all species can be enjoyable to watch. As they go about their ways they are suddenly transformed into natural entertainers. The tinier residents can be surprisingly talented performers. Look at the simple ant, for example. It seems bent on going somewhere, but always having the time to stop briefly to greet another one coming in the opposite direction, always patiently staying in queue.

Other insects too seem to have shared peculiarities. Most bugs and small beetles seem to love rushing to the edges of leaves, sometime stopping a while, sometime just to peer over the edge and move to another edge.

After repeated observations, these routines would become amusing fetishes. Those nervous eyes peeping from behind a leaf never fail to amuse.



*Many of the smaller beetles seem to have an obsession with rushing to the edges of leaves just to peer over them*



*To the observer, there seems to be absolutely no reason for this cliff-hanging act*



The Other Residents



With an arm outside the window it has made, this grasshopper takes its time to artistically chew its meal

This **crab-spider** seems to say "I know sumo"



Grasshoppers are quite bold and flamboyant in announcing their presence



A colourful beetle playing "now you see me, now you don't" from behind a hibiscus leaf



You talking to me?



*Acrobats and Clowns*



*With a leaf as a stage, and the other residents providing music, a caterpillar performs a Chinese opera*



*The Other Residents*

*Damselflies prefer to grasp and balance rather than perch and relax*

Yet another group will entertain you with incredulous acrobatics, walking the tendrils, or defying gravity. Martial arts exponents and even casual observers have drawn strengths from these clownings and frail bravados. Even Muhammad Ali, the legendary boxer is well-known for his "float like a bee, sting like a bee" motto.

Sadly many of their chores have gone unnoticed, brushed of as trivialities, waiting for *The National Geographic* and *Animal Planet* to dramatise and insist on their relevance. Yet within USM itself, there is a whole discovery to be channeled not only to its human residents but also to the rest of humanity.



*For over two months performances by this colony of bats outside the Centre for Educational Sciences did not get good reviews from students and staff*



*This bee does not do tight-tendril walking*



*The commando crawl done upside down*



Associate Professor Mohamed Talhah Idrus is currently a lecturer at the School of Housing, Building and Planning, USM. He can be reached at [tolamaha@yahoo.com](mailto:tolamaha@yahoo.com)



*Shortcuts always save time...at least for this ladybird*



# Biology & Chemistry 1973

The Pioneers



CHAN ENG HENG



CHAN GUAT LIAN



CHOO HOOI SIN



KANG KONG BENG @  
SONGSAK



LIM KAR HWA



LUNG YU LAN



MAHADEVAN  
A.N.S. PILLAI



MUNIANDY @  
GUNALAN TANIMALY



NG CHANG CHAI



OH AIK JIN



OOI KENG CHEW



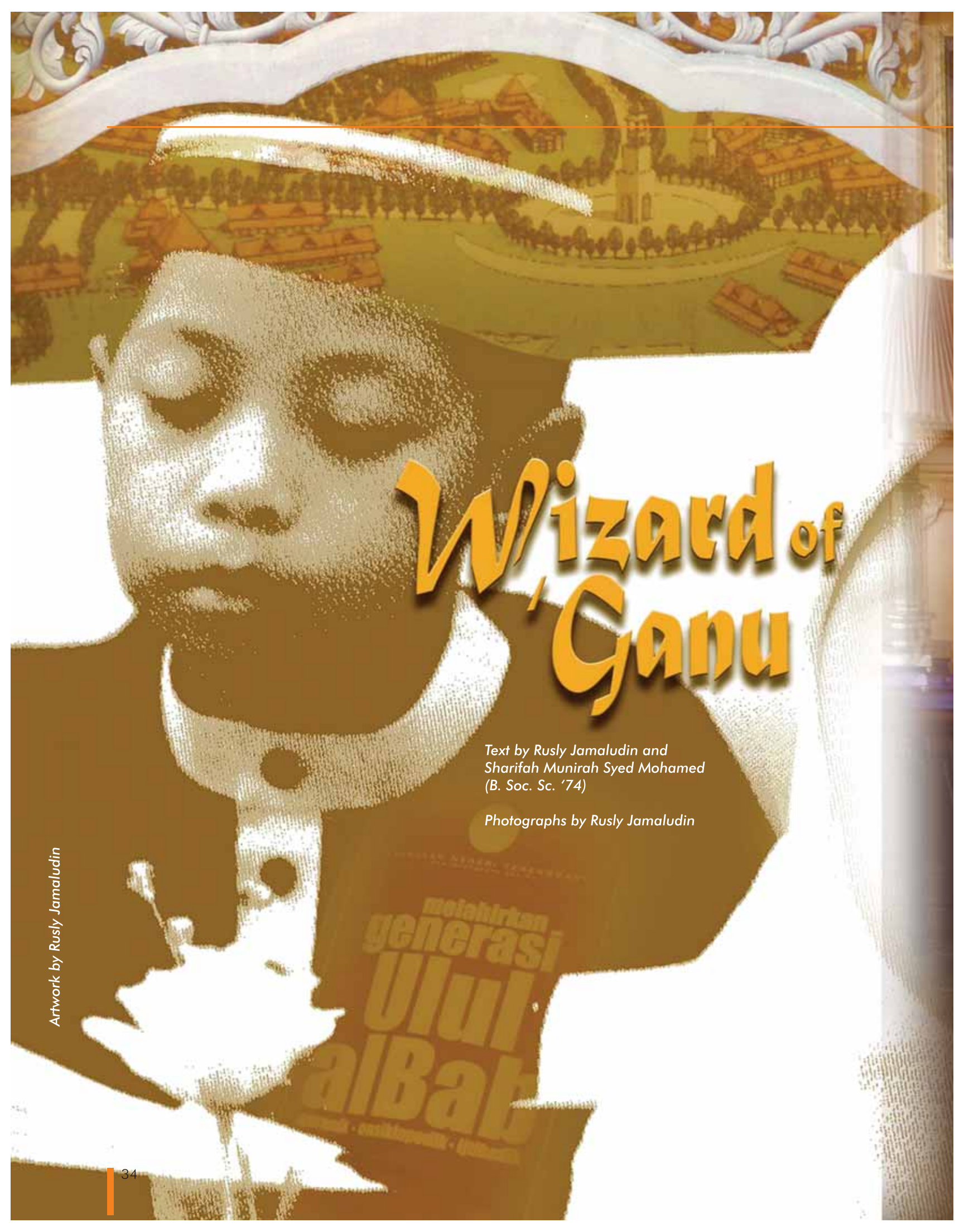
QUAH PAU SAN



SRITHARAN S.T.  
PILLAI

Compiled by Zamhari Ahmad (B. Mgmt '04). The editorial board welcomes updates on your photographs and biodata.





# Wizard of Ganu

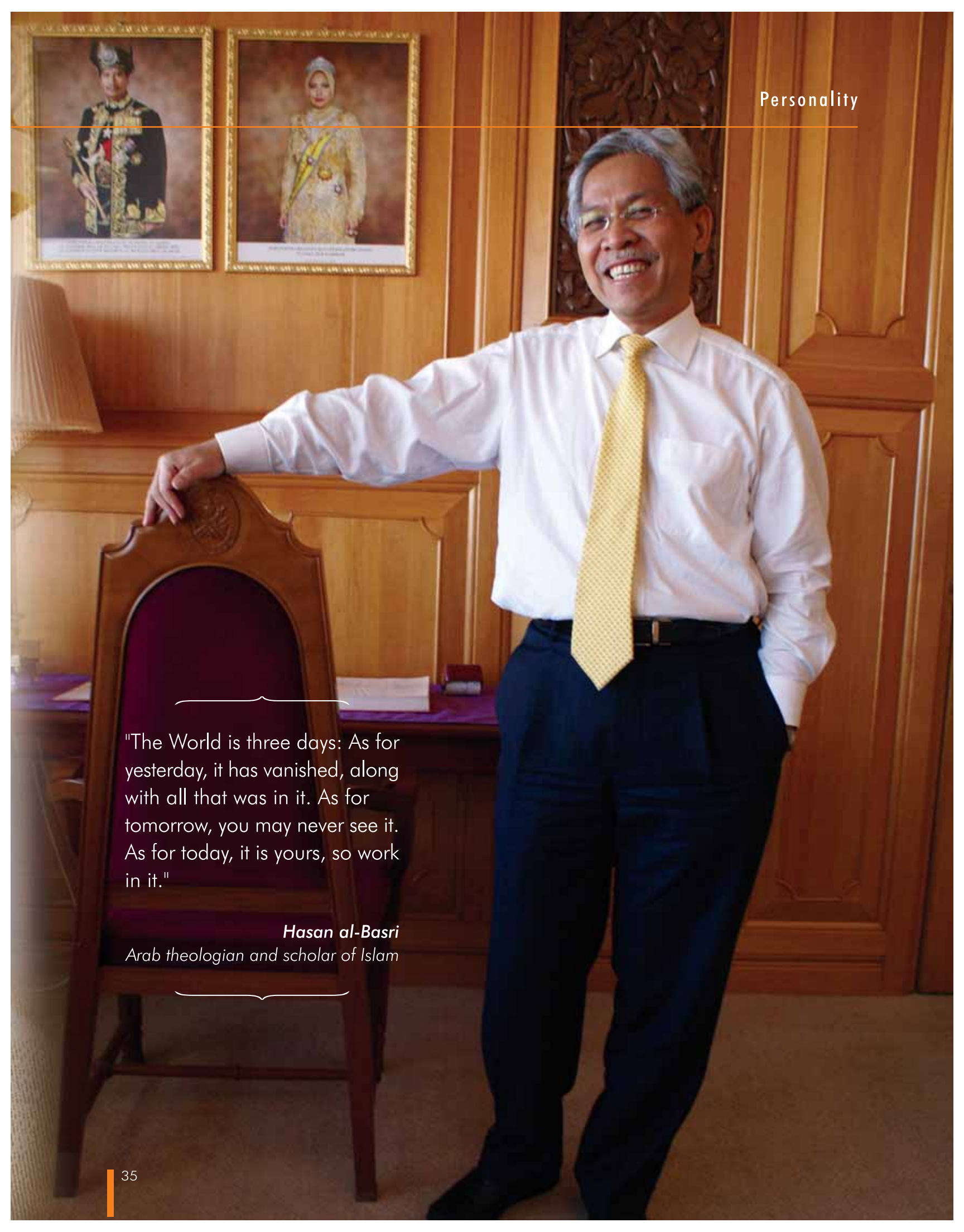
Text by Rusly Jamaludin and  
Sharifah Munirah Syed Mohamed  
(B. Soc. Sc. '74)

Photographs by Rusly Jamaludin

Artwork by Rusly Jamaludin

menahirkan  
generasi  
Ulul  
alBab



A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, a yellow patterned tie, and dark trousers, stands in a wood-paneled room. He is smiling and leaning his right hand on the back of a wooden chair with a red upholstered seat. In the background, two framed portraits hang on the wall. The room features wood paneling and a desk with a lamp.

"The World is three days: As for yesterday, it has vanished, along with all that was in it. As for tomorrow, you may never see it. As for today, it is yours, so work in it."

**Hasan al-Basri**  
*Arab theologian and scholar of Islam*

*Hailing from Besut, Terengganu, born in a family of entrepreneurs, former USM 'golden boy' (gold medalist) has lived his life without regrets. A strong advocate of knowledge, an unwavering thinker, a persistent problem solver, and his favourite personal philosophy is 'Think Right'. The rich spectrum of experiences and the dizzy heights of his success and reputation can be credited from the formative years in USM, providing him the impetus to foray into 'mind businesses'. To him, every challenge is an opportunity and believing this, every opportunity reflects the possibilities for the future.*



For our 'golden boy' (sports gold medalist), his blue business blood is apparent by the various projects he is embarking on. But his main passion lies in transforming the state of mind of the people. He is currently collaborating with USM to set up a 'Mind Centre', a grand plan to develop 'Ganu' (local name for the state of Terengganu) as the foremost training ground for the nation's mind. The Centre is aimed at creating a generation of scholars and thinkers who can lead Muslims in facing an increasingly complex modern world.

"I'm interested to make possible an environment where people's minds and hearts can be creative, innovative and bold, where they can aspire to generate useful and significant things and can aspire to change the world," Terengganu Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Idris Jusoh explained in a wider perspective.

The 'golden boy' Idris admittedly has had more Chinese friends than those of other races since campus and his school days, as he described in a comfortable, homespun way about himself that puts everyone at ease. Among fellow colleagues, he had a reputation as being 'different from others' for he was constantly challenging himself. Almost every time he proposes an 'impossible' idea, he recalls, "No one could see

any reason why it would work or rather no one appeared to be enthusiastic." The refusal to accept his ideas does not dampen his enthusiasm but somehow he always has in his mind to make it happen.

A science-streamer from Sekolah Tunku Abdul Rahman (STAR), Ipoh, he enrolled in USM as an Economics student with a minor in Management, in itself reflecting the anachronistic challenge that he faced, kicking off his student years in USM. Not only that, he also embraced the rigours of being a student leader in 79/80 which undoubtedly honed his leadership skills in developing his career path.

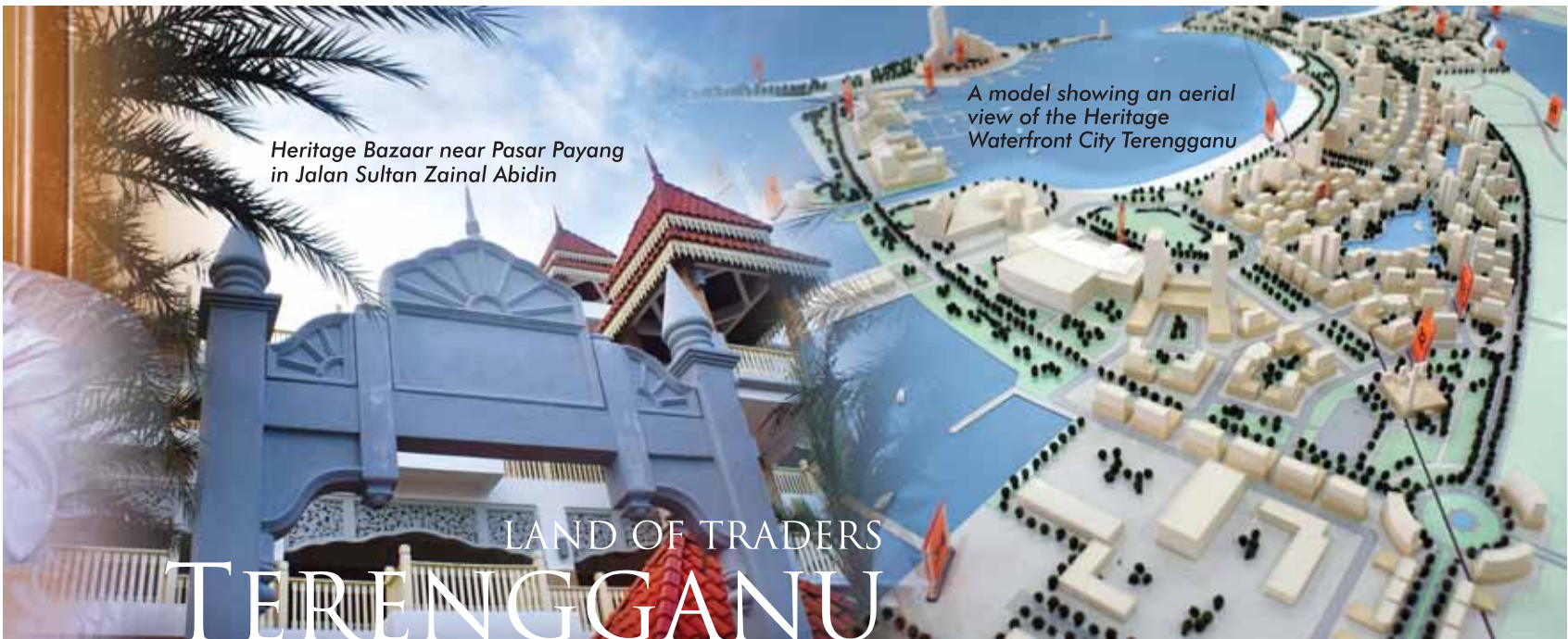
Idris, in his white cotton long-sleeved shirt complete with a yellow tie, beamed a confident smile as he greeted us at his 16th floor office in Wisma Darul Iman. At a sprightly 52, the avid soccer aficionado is fit as a fiddle, and, as this interview reveals, his mind remained sharp and engaged. At heart, he is a pragmatist, a good listener, jovial and has always related with people. He spoke candidly very well at that, obviously confident in commanding the subject.

Call him the ultimate 'social inventor'; he has one of the highest - and certainly most influential - jobs in town. He surely has the right vision to cruise at



Heritage Bazaar near Pasar Payang  
in Jalan Sultan Zainal Abidin

A model showing an aerial  
view of the Heritage  
Waterfront City Terengganu



altitude: he wants to go back to the future. An inconspicuous glance around showed us a breathtaking vista of his and, to a certain extent, his predecessors' signatures and quirks ... all palpable signs of progress.

Speaking of 'Ganu, two things pop into mind: the time-honoured 'Land of the Traders' and the famed *nasi dagang* (Traders' Rice). According to popular tradition, the generous, peace-loving 'Ganu-ians have a fair bit of business blood coursing through their veins. It is assumed locally that the 'Ganu-ians do not only appear to have a particular skill for business of any size but also the creative aptitude in the tricks of the trade. Their business acumen has been nothing short of inspiration food for thoughts.

Under his stewardship, 'Ganu has seen a rigorous shift in the 'state of minds'. The 'Mind Centre' has already taken effect for real and currently well under way. Brandishing catch phrases

The venue for the annual Monsoon  
Cup yachting event in Pulau Duyong



like 'Ulul-Albab Generation', 'Khaira Ummah' (the Excellent Community), 'Wasata' (the Well-balanced Mind), 'Wahidah' (the Global Mindedness), are among others to earmark his vision. Recently, 2,010 kindergarten kids aged between five and six successfully completed their Quran recital where initially the skeptics said it could not be done.

Today, accomplishing the 'impossible' is nothing new for him, witness literally transforming the 'trade winds' into the smooth-sailing successes of the Monsoon Cup, an event that testifies to the contrarian in him.

The famed Mak Ngah Sapiah's **Nasi Dagang** (Trader's Rice) of Chendering,  
two kilometres from Kuala Ibai bridge.

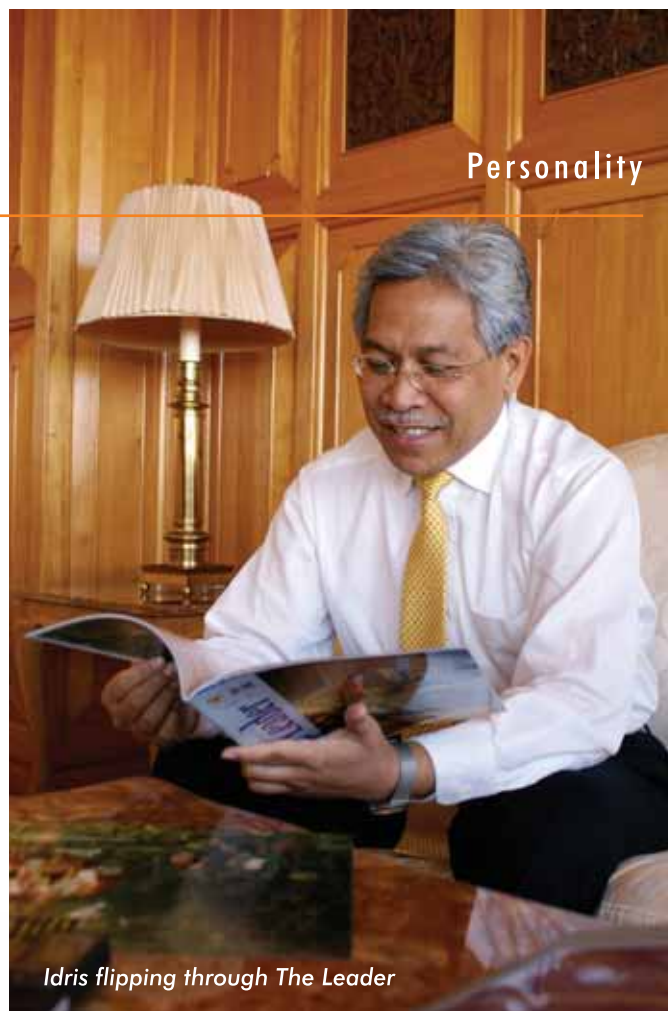


*Wizard of 'Ganu*

As he so often reiterated the '68-times rule', explaining that Quranic wisdom has been the guiding aspiration and taught him valuable thinking lesson. He said, "Understand the lines, and take it for what it's worth for the word 'thinking' had been cited 68 times in the Book." Idris elaborated that it shows that the Quran emphasizes the importance of the need to think and contemplate.

Describing 'recipes' for entrepreneurship success, he replied matter-of-factly, "Your mind is the only thing you can summon to translate your success."

The values of business, he pointed out, no longer rest with just conviction and commitment. According to him, "We have to use our intellect as the primary capital of the trade," he said. "If you make great stuff, people will find you. Individuals are responsible for fixing themselves and building their credibility."



*Idris flipping through The Leader*

Think right and take one step at a time to make a difference.

"You can do it, if you want to. It's really a case of mind over matter. So that's it. Simple and yet not any simpler, none of these are mind-blowing recipes," said the 'golden boy' with a smile.

Indeed, he has more challenging task ahead of him to lead the twin objectives of spiritual and physical well-being into the next century. But it is a responsibility he gladly shoulders as he believes that the sustained future lies in the 'Mind Centre'. This will be the lifelong mission of the Wizard of 'Ganu', Idris.

*Idris showing interest in one of the 'smart kids' of the **Ulul-Albab** programme (Photograph courtesy of Unit Komunikasi Terengganu)*



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# Giving Back

*These bricks dream to become a building... Bricks cost money.  
Donate generously to realise our dream.*

*Sincerely*



Associate Professor Mohamed Talhah Idrus  
Editor  
The Leader

## It's Us!

Work Progress  
at Alumni Club House  
(as on 6 March 2008)

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Yes, I wish to contribute of RM  
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Bendahari Universiti Sains Malaysia).  
The receipt for this contribution can  
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Kindly return the form with the payment to:  
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Level 5, Chancellory Building  
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11800 Minden  
Penang



Text by Hamima Dona Mustafa  
B.A. '73

Photographs by Mohamed Talhah Idrus  
B. Soc. Sc. '74

Artwork by Rusly Jamaludin and Mohamed Talhah Idrus

# Farid's MAKNA



*Two anxious parents hovered over their teenage son, suffering from leukemia. The son was undergoing severe chemotherapy. His skin was black, burnt from inside by the treatment. He was emotionally upset.*

*"Get out! Get out! I don't want to see you! I want to talk to God."*

*The parents, shocked and devastated were in tears as they left the room. They could not believe that their own son, though ailing, would chase them out. As they stood at the doorway, they heard their son weep, "I'm only sixteen, God, I am only sixteen." In between the intense sobbing he repeated, "I am only sixteen. . . I don't want to die. . ."*

The scenario above was narrated by Dato' Mohd Farid Arifin (B. Soc. Sc. '73), the founding President of the National Cancer Council or MAKNA (*Majlis Kanser Nasional*), launched on 30 March, 1995.

"That was one of the saddest stories during my son's illness (that) I can tell you, and each time I relate this story I have this choking sensation."

By God's grace, despite the odds, the son survived after a long period of treatment. That was the turning point in Farid's life.

"It transformed my values, transformed my life," he told *The Leader* editorial team that visited him at his office in Kuala Lumpur city centre recently.

The former deputy minister with two portfolios, Health and Finance, who served two terms during Tun Dr Mahathir's administration said, "I gave up a good job with a good future, all for my son."

"When my son was sick, the family had to sell everything. When he got better a thought struck. I said to my wife, "Why don't we set up a foundation?"

Datin Mariam, Farid's wife, undertook some research on the various foundations to study their set-ups. On 10 November 1994, MAKNA was registered as a non-profit organization. In the Malay language MAKNA means "meaning". When one visits the website of MAKNA at [www.makna.org.my](http://www.makna.org.my) one is greeted with "Welcome to MAKNA (Meaning to Life)".

MAKNA, in its endeavour to be meaningful, sets its mission as follows: "To mobilize resources in order to provide curative, preventative, research and support to cancer patients and families, high risk groups and the general public."

According to Farid, MAKNA is a social enterprise. "The emphasis is on the 'non-profit' nature of the mission. As a social enterprise, the bottom line is "The Mission." He added, "At the end of the day, our mission is to raise funds to give back to cancer patients, to pool and utilize all efforts, expertise and finance from all sectors of the society, to fight cancer and reduce related pain, morbidity and suffering that cancer patients undergo."

To MAKNA, your one **sen** cent can add to millions



Farid's MAKNA

Other MAKNA's undertakings include: keeping track on the latest information leading to the cure of cancer; providing cancer awareness programmes; having a pool of well-trained staff to dispense care and treatment to cancer patients; making available screening and early diagnostic facilities to enable early detection of cancer; sourcing, collating and disseminating information effectively to all levels of society; encouraging, supporting and conducting research in basic science and clinical research on cancer that will lead to innovative treatment approaches; and managing the bursary programme to provide financial assistance to cancer patients who are unable to meet the costs of treatment.

Initially, Farid faced a number of discouraging remarks, including those made by doctors, regarding the setting up of the organization.

Challenged by the negative feedback which he called, the "don't-do-it syndrome", Farid's approach was, "Give me a chance."

With optimism, he said he never thought of stumbling blocks. "You can only try to do it straight away. We never say we cannot do. Try."



A certificate from Taiwan in recognition of Farid's efforts

Setting up MAKNA has been more than satisfying. Farid combined two terms, 'satisfying' and 'enhancing' – "satisficing" – to describe the feeling he obtained from his involvement with MAKNA.

He said, "The experience is spiritually, emotionally, and mentally enhancing and rewarding."

"I enjoy the job because it got good values that we developed and to share the values with so many people," said the founding President of 14 years. "The values were embodied by three letters, RGT: Right, Good, Truth. Are we doing something right? Are we doing good? Are we on the truth? These values encompass all other values," he explained. "They make us feel motivated."



A well-wisher donated a space in Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur for Farid to carry out MAKNA's activities



Farid's MAKNA

According to him, an estimated 120,000 people donate money daily through the bank. He said that lorry loads of coins totaling RM100,000 make their way to the bank. There were even foreign coins.

Another gratifying factor was the appreciation expressed by total strangers.

"My greatest joy is to see and run MAKNA the way it is today – successful," Farid said.

His vision would be to see a state-of-the-art cancer centre with branches in ASEAN countries, replicating what MAKNA does in Malaysia.

With success came the desire to spread the know-how that he had practised in MAKNA. As an alumnus of Universiti Sains Malaysia, Farid would be working together with the Alumni Liaison Office to form a "Social Enterprise Programme For USM Alumni". A proposal is in the works to identify a core group of professionals and qualified alumni with management background for the purpose of "giving back to society."

Farid emphasized, "We then have to follow through till we succeed, to bring up the image of alumni. Let us be the first alumni to do something, to raise

funds, to give back to society. Let's share the mission," he said enthusiastically. "Let's show results."

He added, "One way to do that would be to develop the enticement of emotional acceptance or attachment."

He went on to say that to make a social enterprise a success one should apply business principles with no profit in mind. For him, the programmes that one embarks upon should make an impact on society, touching the emotions of the public. He suggested working with the urban poor and with children, among other projects.

A typewritten quotation in bold lettering pasted at the edge of Farid's table, facing the visitor, summed up Farid's philosophy:

**"The things which matter most must never be at the mercy of the things which matter least."**  
- Goethe.



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





# Talking Straits Chinese

Text and Photographs by Yong Check Yoon

*A traditional shophouse with an  
elaborate facade (Photograph  
by Rusly Jamaludin)*







*A row of houses with elaborate plaster works and their five-foot way paved with Victorian tiles.*



*Now obsolete, lanterns were traditionally used to inform passers-by who the residents of a house are.*

Much is not understood, even among the Chinese, but there is a purpose for every architectural or artistic element incorporated into a traditional Chinese house. I, too, once thought that these were artistic embellishments to flaunt the wealth of the houseowner. Perhaps this is just one reason, as the poor would not have the money to own a house, let alone have such intricate works of art done by artisans brought in from China.

It is this lack of understanding that led houseowners to destroy these works of art, especially on the façade, particularly after the Repeal of the Rent Control Act in 2000. Instead of being restored, many of these embellishments were plastered over and painted with modern acrylic-based paints. The heritage zoning failed to protect houses from neglect as the urban population

moved out, leaving houses to crumble. In Penang alone, there were more than 17,000 pre-war houses when the Rent Control Act was repealed. Urban bungalows fell into neglect or otherwise demolished.

One of the vanishing features is the tradition of hanging huge waxed paper lanterns over the five-foot way of a house. This tradition can be traced back to China where there is no allocation of house address, hence the lanterns, which often bore the family name and other details of the residents of the house, serve the purpose of identifying the people who lived there.

Even the wooden signboard hung above the front door has a purpose. It often tells you the origin of the residents. The Khoos of the *Leong San Tong Khoo Kongsì*, for example, would display the signboard with the Chinese characters 'Sin Kang' (New River) written on it. This would enable you to trace the genealogical history of the residents to the *Sin Kang* village in Fujian province, China.



*A residential signboard indicates the village of origin of its residents.*



Works of **chian nian** found under the eaves of the roof of a shophouse on Maxwell Road.

At a vacated house along Maxwell Road, I was utterly surprised to find *chian nian* (cut-and-paste) works under the eaves of the roof of a shophouse. These are often seen on roofs of temples. Using coloured porcelain shards broken into the exact shape and size which they required, skilled artisans working on the *chian nian* would paste the shards together with plaster to form three-dimensional pictures. It is a highly skilled and intricate task as the quality of the *chian nian* is gauged by the complexity of the art work and how much plaster can be seen exposed between the shards.

On the façade of some houses, it is possible to spot pictures or plaster works of symbols believed to be auspicious as these symbols, when pronounced, sound similar to certain auspicious words. One such example is the use of bats (*pien fu*) to symbolise luck because luck is also pronounced as 'fu'. If you visit a Chinese home, you may find the Chinese character of luck being pasted upside down. This does not mean that the people who did it are illiterate. In fact, the Chinese word for upside down is 'dao' which is also a homophone for 'arrive'. In other words, hanging the 'luck' character upside down means that 'luck has arrived'!



Ventilation hole with elaborate carvings and with the character 'fu' (luck) located in the centre



Similarly, you may find stalks of peony in a vase painted or in the form of a relief on a wall. It is not merely used for decoration as the peony is called *fu kwei hua* which literally means Flower of Riches and Honour. A vase is called 'ping' which is a homophone for the 'maintenance of peace'. Hence when both peony and the vase are combined, they form the rebus for the popular Chinese phrase of *ping aun, fu kwei* (peace and security, riches and honour).

The bamboo is also a common element in Chinese art. As a plant, the bamboo is hollow within yet it can withstand the harshest winter. The bamboo is meant to symbolise a gentleman who is tough on the outside but who do not bear grudges (symbolised by the hollowness).

*A relief carving on a door depicting stalks of peony in a vase. They form the rebus for 'peace and security, riches and honour'.*



Symbols of longevity are abundant: bats, white cranes, lingzhi mushroom, and dragons. But why was the dragon selected? The emperor wanted a symbol of longevity - eternal life - but none of the existing animals in the animal kingdom could fit this category, not even the tortoise. The dragon was hence born, with the head of a camel, horns of a deer, eyes of a rabbit, ears of a cow, neck of a snake, belly of a frog, scales of a carp, claws of a hawk and palms of a tiger.

Are the use of such symbols and rebuses part of a superstition? They were probably used to instil positive values in the residents of a house rather than as symbols of superstition. At least that's how I would rather think of it, after studying them for almost two decades and understanding their significance. It is sad, however, that all these positive values will somehow be obliterated when Komtar expands its footprint to Maxwell Road and Tek Soon Street area.

*Behind the scroll are an artemisia leaf and the joo-i (a short sword and its guard), which is used to symbolise prosperity. The head of the joo-i resembles the lingzhi mushroom which symbolises longevity.*



Yong Check Yoon is currently an Editor in the Alumni Liaison Office, USM. He can be reached at [cyyong@notes.usm.my](mailto:cyyong@notes.usm.my)





7-12-2007  
3.00pm Registration at Secretariat House,  
Persatuan Alumni



8.00pm An Evening with  
Alumni at Guest House



8-12-2007  
8.00am Senaman Poco-Poco at USM Stadium



10.00am The Minden Challenge, Explorace from  
USM Stadium to Tasik Harapan





Highlights

**12.30pm**  
**Lunch at Pesiban,**  
**Pusat Pengajian Seni**

**5.00pm**  
**Football Match at USM**  
**Stadium with Dato' Idris Jusoh**  
**as striker for Alumni team.**



**8.30pm** **The Big Night at Graha Seni- Host by Ahmad Fedtri, Imuda and Sabri Yunus. Dinner with two Ministers [Dato' Idris Jusoh and Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid] and music by the University's first band, Tabula Rasa.**



**9-12-2007**  
**A visit to Merbok -**  
**VC meets Tuan Haji Romli**  
**and the villagers.**

*Photograph by Zamhari Ahmad, Fairuz and Centre of Instructional Technology and Multimedia (PTPM), USM*





### Golden Service

Students Affairs and Development Division organised a volunteer team to help cleaning a flooded area in Pahang and Kelantan from 27 to 30 December 2007. The Student Representative Council, Undergraduate Residents' Council and State Children's Association collaborated in the effort. Ninety students and staff were sent to Pekan, Pahang from Main Campus and another 120 students and hospital staff were sent to Tumpat, Kelantan from the Health Campus.



### Pesta Hoki (Hockey Fest)

Ernst & Young won the Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Challenge Trophy at the 34th USM Penang International Sixes and Sevens Hockey Festival 2007 while Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) won the women and men's category for the public universities grouping. This event held on 14-16 December 2007 managed to carve a listing in the Malaysia's Book of Record as having the most number of teams - 410 teams - participating.



### EKSPEN 2008

'Ekspo Kerjaya dan Pendidikan' (EKSPEN, Career and Education Expo) was successfully held on 29 February to 2 March 2008. Themed 'Graduat Berkualiti Menjana Kerjaya Cemerlang' (Quality Graduates Produces Brilliant Careers), this yearly event was jointly organised by Students Affairs and Development Division (BHEPP) and Counselling and Career Unit in collaboration with Alumni Liaison Office (ALO). Almost 1500 students and some of the schools in Penang and Kedah attended the event. Tan Sri Dato' Haji Ani Arope launched the EKSPEN. The event concluded with a forum 'Dialogue with USM Alumni' with Anti Corruption Agency Deputy General Director Dato' Abu Kassim bin Mohamed and Queensbay Mall (Penang) General Manager Datin Rafidah Abdul Jalil as panelists.





**STUDENTS' DIARIES 2008**

	Programme	Venue
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Netball Fiesta 3 on 3 USM Open</li> <li>- Hockey League MASUM</li> <li>- Prime Minister Integrity Debate</li> <li>- EKSPEN 2008</li> <li>- World Teenage Cricket</li> <li>- EKSPEN 2008</li> <li>- Gemilang Squash Circuit: squash, athletics, <i>sepak takraw</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> </ul>
<b>MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 32<sup>nd</sup> USM Sport Award Ceremony</li> <li>- Art Heritage Project (<i>Wayang Kulit</i>)</li> <li>- USM Open Handball Championship</li> <li>- <i>Citrawarna</i> Night</li> <li>- Friendly Match 10's <i>Sandakan Eagle</i> - USM</li> <li>- Gemilang Squash Circuit: squash, athletics, <i>sepak takraw</i></li> <li>- 34<sup>th</sup> USM Annual Athletics Meet</li> <li>- Anti-Drugs Seminar and Campaign</li> <li>- Career Symposium 2008</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Health Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Health Campus</li> </ul>
<b>APRIL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- '<i>Pantun</i>' Festival and Poetry Recital Competition</li> <li>- Career Carnival 2008</li> <li>- MASUM Sports Award</li> <li>- USM Open Sepak Takraw Championship</li> <li>- Self-Development Camp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Campus</li> <li>Health Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> </ul>
<b>MAY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivational Programme for Society</li> <li>- MASUM Sport, Sabah</li> <li>- <i>Gunung Ayam</i> Recreation Challenge</li> <li>- Cultural Exchange Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>UMS, Sabah</li> <li>Health Campus</li> <li>Health Campus</li> </ul>
<b>JUNE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivational Programme for Society</li> <li>- Malaysian Health Ministry Sport Competition</li> <li>- Penang Bridge Marathon</li> <li>- Malaysian - Thailand Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> <li>Main Campus</li> </ul>

For details, kindly contact Mr. Helmi Samsudin, Assistant Registrar of Students Affairs and Development at 04-653 3103.

DI SINI AKU DI MENARA ILMU

Aku bersyukur kepadaMu  
bersama kekurangan dan ketidaksempurnaan  
aku bernafas di ruangMu  
berkesempatan mengenali Keesaan dan KekuasaanMu  
indahNya ciptaanMu  
besarNya segala nikmatMu  
kutanam....kunekad....kucitakan anganku itu  
untuk mereka yang mengerti hati ini  
kukan tabah harungi  
untuk ayah yang berpeluh usungku mengajikanku  
buat bonda di teratak itu  
yang sentiasa pujukku dorongku semangatkanku  
kebesaranMu membawa aku ke bumi Minden  
kerusi rodaku ligat berpusing  
mengejar waktu mencedok ilmu  
terima kasih kerana prihatin kepadaku yang begini  
cacat...  
sejambak kasih buat ayah dan bonda  
pengorbananmu tak upaya kubalas  
cuma sebuah harapan  
akan kujadikan kalung-kalung sebagai mutiara  
penghias taman hidupku  
akan ku semat kata hikmahmu...  
jika jatuh bangunlah sendiri...

tapi...  
belum sempat kuhirup segar taman Minden  
wanginya bunga-bunga ilmu  
ayah mengadap Illahi  
Tuhan...  
getirnya hidup aku yang tidak sempurna ini  
kehilangan tempat bergantung kasih  
tempat berpaut sayang  
bonda...  
dibahumu aku gantung harapan  
doakan kejayaanku

anakmu cacat anggota...  
bukan cacat hati!

wajah bonda ku itu terlihat kerlipan cahaya  
sekalung kasih pada saudaraku  
terima kasih rakan dan taulan  
bantuan kalian dilupa tidak  
Bukit Minden terus ku daki  
Tuhan... dugaanMu maha hebat

belum sempat tanganku menggenggam ijazah  
bonda pula mengadap Illahi  
Tuhan... aku cacat... tanpa ayah dan bondaku  
buat saudara saudaraku...  
dikaulah tempat aku mengadu  
jutaan kasih tak terhingga  
dalam sibuk kalian  
aku tidak dibiar terkapai-kapai  
buat teman-teman  
terimalah aku seadanya  
USM...

anak yatim dan cacat ini  
tidak akan kenal erti penat  
telah kubuktikan  
ijazah pertama dan kedua dapat jua ku genggam erat  
kuterus luaskan arahku  
kukan terus lagi berjuang  
memegang janjiku pada mereka  
pada diriku  
tunaikan mimpi ini  
kukan berbakti pada menara ilmu ini  
hala sebagai ilmunan

**MOHAMAD MUZAMMIL BIN MOHAMAD NOOR**  
*(B. Humanities '00)*  
*Academic Staff Training Scheme (A.S.T.S.) Fellow*





"Dunia USM banyak mengajar erti kehidupan. Saya beruntung kerana sepanjang 2000-2003 dan 2004-2005, saya berpeluang merasai keseronokan di dunia kampus USM. Mungkin, untuk mengulangi saat-saat manis di USM adalah sesuatu yang mustahil, namun setiap kali mengingati dan mengenang semula saat itu adalah sesuatu yang menyeronokkan."

**NURUL FIZAHAM BIN FIJASRI**  
B. Sc. (App) '03  
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I remembered being confronted with the most vulgar words in the Tamil language when I registered as a student at the Desasiswa in June 1975. Overcome with emotion, leaving home, being away from parents and siblings for the first time, "ragging" brought me down to earth. The seniors taught me a strange salute by leaping high to salute with hands and legs outstretched (it is alright if you are unable to imagine this feat). Then I had to sing standing on the table at the Fu Manchu canteen with a bottle for a mike. My guitarist with a broom was Christiana Tharsis. This was bonding USM-style.

One song I learned well was:  
"T - O - N - I - C C - H - O - P G - A - J - A - H

Aji No Moto"

**GUNASEELAN KUNJAN**  
B. Soc. Sc. '78  
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The view, landscape, especially the School of Housing, Building and Planning (HBP)

Learning how to deal with pressure

Love nature, USM is the place.

**NUR AZUANIDA YAZID**  
HBP '04  
yodha82@yahoo.co.uk

Campus environment created a new lifestyle

My networking with students currently enrolled on campus as well as ex-students keeps me up-to-date with current campus life.

USM is d'best landscape and Desasiswa Gemilang is d'best Desa ! We called our networking group "Gemilangkaigal".

**NIZAM SHAH B. ALLBASC**  
(B. Acc. '03)  
a.nizamshah@gmail.com, nizamshah@muamalat.com.my

"Those were the days when Fu Man Chu was there to fill hunger pangs, durian valley for nostalgic moments and blocks 307, 308, 95 where all the gila-gila meet"

**YAP SOO HAR**  
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**Cakerawala Penulisan Sejarah dan Intelektualisme**

**Editor: Sohaimi Abdul Aziz**  
**ISBN: 978-983-861-336-1**  
**Price: RM 48.00**

**Synopsis:**

*Buku ini membincangkan perkembangan, kekuatan dan pengkhususan bidang penulisan di Pulau Pinang dari dahulu hingga hari ini. Buku ini memaparkan secara komprehensif tentang sumbangan penulis-penulis di Pulau Pinang yang menulis dalam pelbagai bidang seperti sastera, sejarah, warisan, seni persembahan, agama islam dan kepenggunaan serta mengemukakan tokoh-tokoh yang penting dalam penulisan di Pulau Pinang. Buku ini juga adalah buku pertama yang mengemukakan sumbangan tiga kelompok penulis di Pulau Pinang di dalam satu buku iaitu penulis Melayu, Cina dan Tamil. Selain daripada bidang penulisan, sumbangan tiga kelompok penulis ini mencerminkan betapa pesatnya bidang penulisan di Pulau Pinang. Beberapa bab yang terdapat di dalam buku ini memperkatakan perkara-perkara yang belum ditulis secara yang boleh dipertanggungjawabkan, seperti penulisan tentang pengarang manuskrip dan sejarah percetakan di Pulau Pinang, perkembangan penulisan kreatif seperti novel dan cerpen, memperkenalkan nama-nama penulis kreatif daripada bangsa Melayu, Cina dan India di Pulau Pinang. Buku ini juga membincangkan ketokohan beberapa tokoh penting seperti Ahmad Rijaluddin di dalam bidang sastera, Mohd. Yusoff Sultan Maidin di dalam bidang sejarah, Tan Sooi Beng dan Khoo Salma Nasution di dalam bidang seni dan warisan.*



**Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education in Malaysia**

**Editors: Sarjit Kaur, Morshidi Sirat, Norzaini Azman**  
**ISBN: 978-983-861-345-3**  
**Price: RM 60.00**

**Synopsis:**

Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education in Malaysia is a timely and much awaited collection of thought-provoking and well researched academic articles by renowned academics in higher education institutions in Malaysia. Authors of each chapter skilfully contemplate and effectively discuss various issues and challenges surrounding the landscape of public and private higher education in Malaysia. The in-depth discourses of the topics are wide-ranging enough to appeal to all readers yet carefully structured to also suit specialised readers. Topics range from understanding undergraduate student experience, empowering learners with literacy skills, grooming 'resistant' readers, tackling employability concerns, internationalisation university curriculums, understanding authentic assessments to handling the linguistic and cultural diversity of international students, understanding university rankings and enhancing quality university teaching through the use of ICT and blended learning. For the first time in Malaysian higher education, finally a truly comprehensive and well-focused book that can help provide a much-needed platform for other academics to strengthen their understanding on the literature on global and market forces is published. This book also increases their understanding on how Malaysian public and private institutions are responding and reacting to higher education demands in today's increasingly globalised and worldwide interconnectedness.

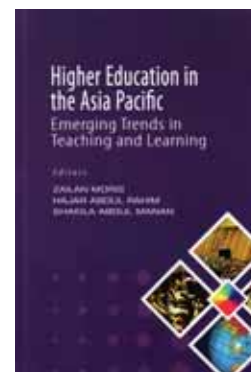


**Higher Education in Asia Pacific: Emerging Trends in Teaching and Learning**

**Editors: Zailan Moris, Hajar Abdul Rahim, Shakila Abdul Manan**  
**ISBN: 978-983-3986-13-2**  
**Price: RM 52.00**

**Synopsis:**

The chapters in this volume are based on papers presented at the International Forum on Higher Education Policy Research and Management held in Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia in November 2006 with the theme 'Higher Education in the Asia Pacific and Networked Society'. The forum which was organised by the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), Malaysia in co-operation with the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education and also the Centre for Asia Pacific Transformation Studies (CAPSTRAN) of Wollongong University, Australia had the primary objective of gathering higher education researchers and administrators from the Asia-Pacific region to deliberate on higher education issues with a view to undertaking collaborative effort among countries in this region. The chapters are concerned with emerging trends in teaching and learning in higher education of the Asia-Pacific region, specifically those which relate to the issues of professionalism in higher education, curriculum development, pedagogy, and gender.



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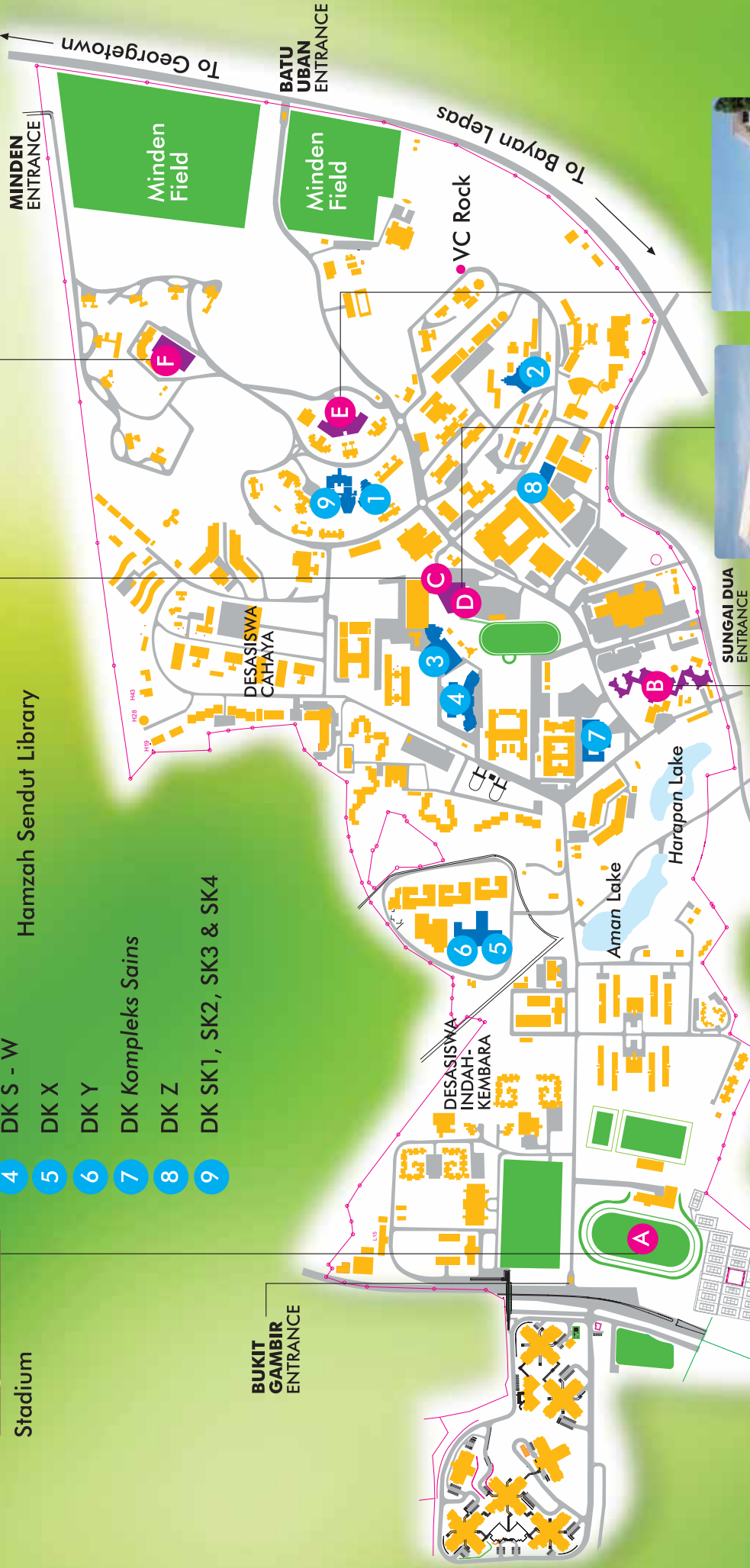
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## *Very Important Gestures*

To compliment his speech, a VIP demonstrates some very important gestures (VIG) from behind a rostrum in Dewan Tuanku Syed Putra (DTSP), the University's grand hall.