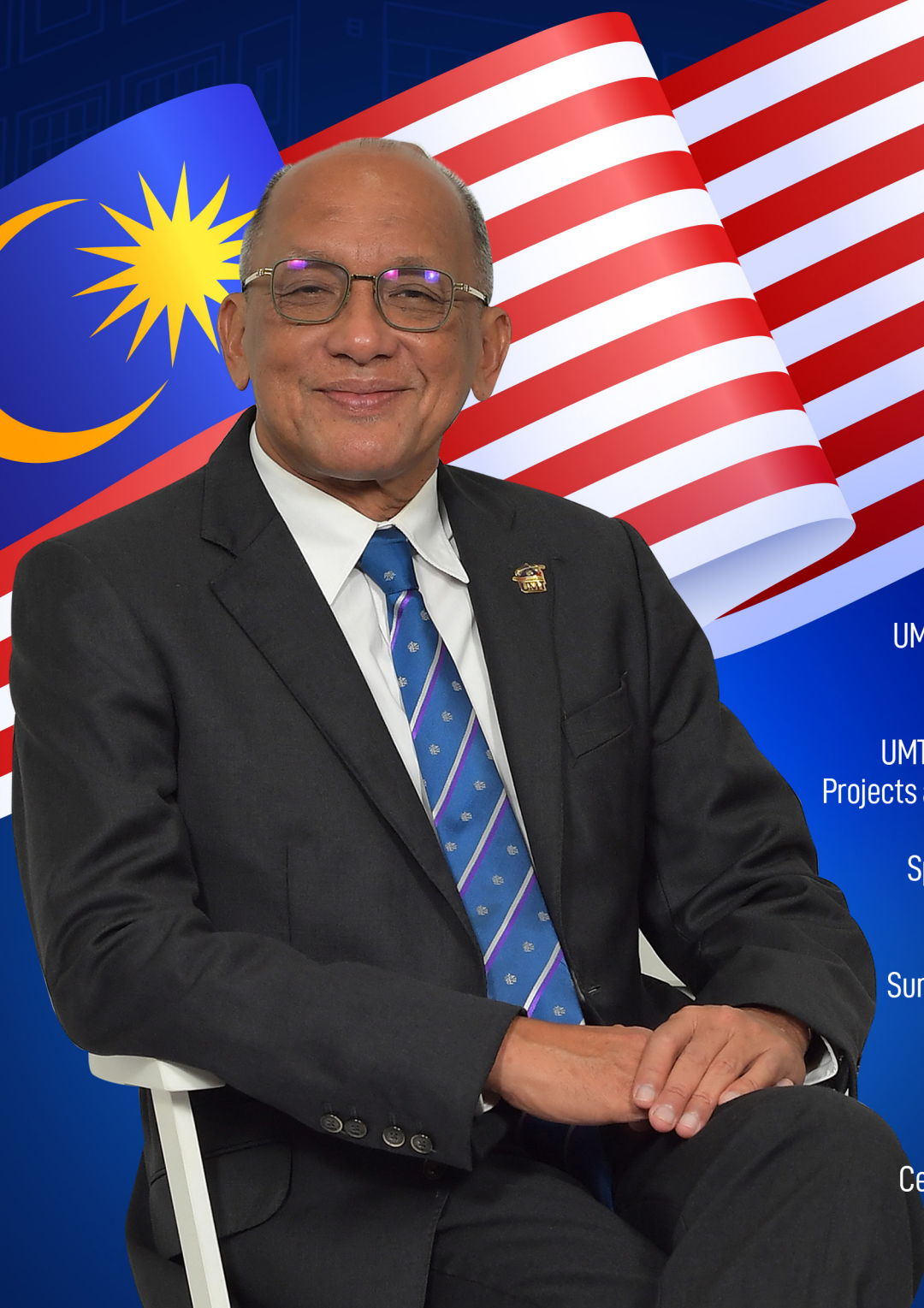




# UMT NEWSLETTER

Ocean of Discoveries for Global Sustainability

Volume 1, Issue 6, September 2021



## In this issue :

.....  
UMT Welcomes Professor Mazlan as New Vice Chancellor

UMT Students Showcase Research Projects at SRD 2021 with Prizes in Sight

Special Lecture Draws Audience from as Far as China

Summer School Lets International Participants Learn More about Terengganu's Uniqueness

UMT Gears up for National Day Celebration with Series of Events

## UMT NEWSLETTER

Vol 1 Issue 6, September 2021

### Executive Editor

Professor Dr. Fauziah Abu Hasan

### Editor

Wan Zulkifli Wan Kassim

### Content Advisors

Associate Professor Dr. Yusliza Mohd Yusoff  
Dr. Azza Jauhar Ahmad Tajuddin  
Sayed Mohd Tamimuddin Sayed Ibrahim  
Shafie Umardi @ Kamarol Bahrin  
Wan Ab Hafiz Wan Ibrahim

### Coordinators

Rozita Alias @ Abdul Latiff  
Amirul Salam Hasan  
Shamsul Hafizi Saleh

### Designer

Azlin Abdullah

### Photographers

Tengku Iskandar Zulfahmi Tengku Mohamad  
Mohd Sharwan Abd Ghani  
Mohd Shukry Tahar  
Nur Hafiza Ellias

### Contributors

Dr. Fathilah Ismail  
Dr. Maharani Abu Bakar  
Dr. Siti Sofo Ismail  
Aini Zahida Din  
Mazlina Ahmad  
Sayed Mohd Tamimuddin Sayed Ibrahim

Corporate Communication Office  
Universiti Malaysia Terengganu  
email : [pro@umt.edu.my](mailto:pro@umt.edu.my)

August was a momentous month for UMT, as the university received a new Vice-Chancellor. Congratulations, Professor Dr Mazlan Abd. Ghaffar! We would also like to thank the previous Vice Chancellor, Professor Dato Dr Nor Aieni Mokhtar, for all her contributions, and we wish her all the best in her new appointment as Distinguished Research Fellow at UMT's Institute of



Oceanography and Environment and hope that it will be a fulfilling and rewarding one. Professor Mazlan is an equally capable academician, an outstanding researcher in the fields of climate change and fisheries. Before his appointment as UMT Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mazlan was UMT Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation. In this role, he helped UMT achieve 5-star MyRA rating for the first time and the Institute of Tropical Aquaculture and Fisheries obtain Higher Institution Centre of Excellence (HiCOE) recognition from the Ministry of Higher Education. Thus, he is in a good position to fulfil UMT's vision of becoming a leading university in the fields of marine science and aquatic resources. We firmly believe that everyone at UMT will give all the support Professor Mazlan needs to carry out his role as Vice Chancellor and take UMT, a university ranked among Asia's top 200 in QS Asian University Rankings 2021, towards greater excellence.

Professor Dr. Fauziah Abu Hasan  
Executive Editor

## CONTENTS

- 1 UMT Welcomes Professor Mazlan as New Vice Chancellor**
- 2 UMT Students Showcase Research Projects at SRD 2021 with Prizes in Sight**
- 3 Special Lecture Draws Audience from as Far as China**
- 4 Summer School Lets International Participants Learn More about Terengganu's Uniqueness**
- 5 UMT Gears up for National Day Celebration with Series of Events**



# UMT Welcomes Professor Mazlan as New Vice Chancellor

UMT Vice Chancellor vacancy was finally filled on 2 August when Higher Education Minister Datuk Dr Noraini Ahmad announced the appointment of Professor Dr Mazlan Abd Ghaffar for the post effective the said date.

Datuk Noraini cited Professor Mazlan's extensive experience in leadership roles as well as research and innovation as the basis for his selection.

"I am deeply humbled by this appointment," Professor Mazlan said in an interview with local media after the announcement. "I thank the Higher Education Minister, and I will do my best to fulfil my responsibilities."

Professor Mazlan graduated from Universiti Putra Malaysia with a degree in Fisheries, then obtained a Master of Science in Topical Coastal Studies from University of Newcastle, England. He received his PhD in Environmental Fish Biology and Ecophysiology from University of Wales, United Kingdom.

Professor Mazlan previously was UMT Deputy Vice Chancellor, holding the research and innovation portfolio. In this role, he had further lifted research activities at UMT to new heights, as evidenced by a series of notable achievements.

Among the achievements were getting the Institute of Tropical Aquaculture and Fisheries (AKUATROP) officially recognized as a Higher Institution Centre of Excellence (HiCoE) for Research and Innovation; leading a Long-term Research Grant Scheme (LRGS) project, titled Ocean Climate Change: Potential Risk, Impact, and Adaptation towards Marine and Coastal Ecosystem Services in Malaysia, in collaboration with several public universities; and setting up a method of generating university's fund through commercialization of intellectual properties.

Professor Mazlan set up the Commercialisation Centre at UMT to identify research products with the potential to be registered as intellectual properties and subsequently commercialised. Thus far, 105 products have become intellectual properties and contributed to UMT's income.

Professor Mazlan is currently a member of several international organisations including Ichthyological Society of Japan, Marine Biology Association of United Kingdom, Asean Fisheries Society, and Taiwan Oceanography Society.



Professor Mazlan said that he will continue with the agenda of further strengthening UMT's niche area of marine science as part of the effort to position UMT as an excellent marine-focused university.

He also plans to formulate new strategies that will enable UMT to improve its ranking, especially among institutions of higher learning in Asia.

"UMT is now ranked among 195 Asia's best universities, but we want to occupy a higher spot in the next rankings," he said.

Professor Mazlan's appointment as Vice Chancellor was met with positive responses from UMT staff. Congratulatory messages filled the official email inbox once news of his selection broke.

Professor Mazlan succeeded Professor Dato' Dr Nor Aieni Mokhtar, whose tenure as UMT Vice Chancellor had ended. Professor Nor Aieni held the helm for six years beginning from 2015.

# UMT Students Showcase Research Projects at SRD 2021 with Prizes in Sight



More than 1400 UMT students presented their final year research projects at the virtually held Student Research Day (SRD) 2021 in August, hoping to impress the judges enough to be among the prize winners.

SRD is UMT's annual event, and SRD 2021 marked its fourth holding.

Committee member Dr Siti Sofo Ismail said that UMT decided to hold SRD 2021, via online platform, despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic for a special reason. "It was to show appreciation towards students' efforts in successfully completing their Final Year Project course recently," Dr Siti Sofo said. The Faculty of Science and Marine Environment she is attached to as Chemistry lecturer was appointed as SRD 2021 organiser.

SRD 2021 theme was Managing Research Through the Global Pandemic.

Students submitted their research presentations as videos, categorized into Research Video 1 if students presented their research proposals or into Research Video 2 if they presented their theses or research articles.

Each video stood a chance of winning the Best Research Video (UMT SRD 2021) under both categories. However, the video must first make the cut at the programme and the faculty level. For the final round, each of the five faculty submitted five best videos from each category for judging.

Judges were appointed among industry players and academics. The 12 industry judges come from well-known corporations and organisations such

as Pharmaniaga Berhad, Telekom Malaysia, Sultan Mizan Antarctic Research Foundation, and Ministry of Youth and Sports. The five academic judges were lecturers from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Universiti Tun Husain Onn (Pagoh), and Universiti Teknologi MARA (Sungai Buloh). Associate Professor Dr Marinah Mohd Ariffin, FSSM Dean, served as the head judge.

Winners of first, second, third, and two consolation prizes for each category were announced during the closing ceremony officiated by UMT Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Mazlan Abd Ghaffar. Winners took home cash prizes.

For Research Video 1 category, first prize winner was Ong Kai Yin from the Faculty of Fisheries and Food Sciences. She was supervised by Ts Dr Ng Lee Chuan. For Research Video 2, first prize winner was Dania Qarrina Azman from the Faculty of Ocean Engineering and Informatics. She was supervised by Professor Ts Dr Che Mohd Ruzaidi Ghazali.

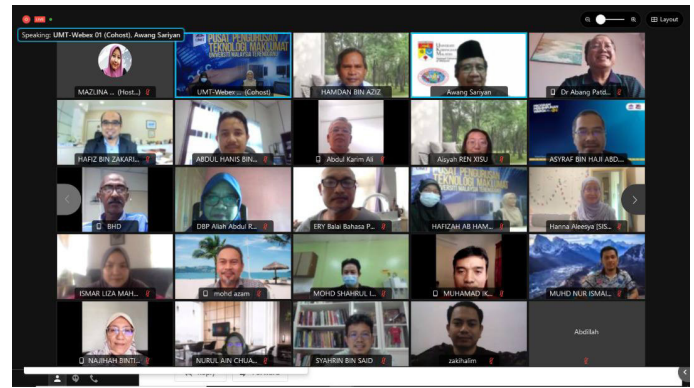
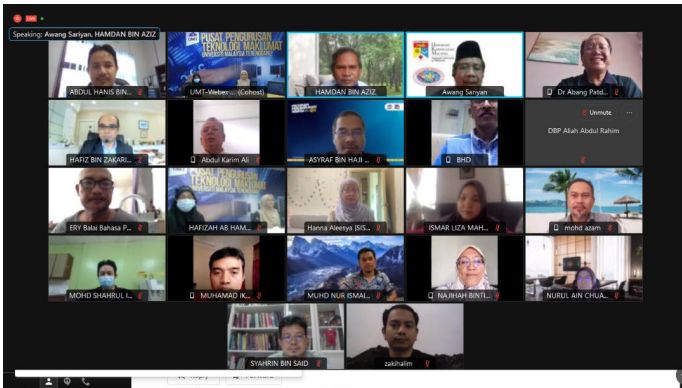
"I am humbled and honoured," Dania said. "The entire journey was definitely a learning experience for me."

Dania's project, The Effect of Pyrolysis Temperature and Heating Rate on Graphitic Compound Produced from Waste PET Bottle, incorporated upcycling method to reduce plastic pollution. She experimented with converting waste PET bottle to graphitic compound through pyrolysis.

"I hope my research could be a benchmark for creative upcycling of plastic waste," she said.



# Special Lecture Draws Audience from as Far as China



Several lecturers from China’s universities were part of the audience during a special lecture, delivered online and in Malay, on 3 August.

The Darul Iman Lecture was co-organised by the Department of Languages and Communication, UMT and the Institute of Language and Literature (Eastern Region).

The lecture was delivered by internationally renowned Malay Language expert Professor Datuk Seri Dr Awang Sariyan. His lecture was titled Malaysia-China Relationship in the Context of Civilization: From Bahari Era to Present Era.

“We invited these lecturers from China for a reason,” said Mazlina Ahmad, event coordinator and Malay Language lecturer with the department. “Their universities offer Malay Language as one of the academic programmes. Also, they know who Professor Awang is, and the topic of the lecture is relevant to them.”

These lecturers are from Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), Yunnan Minzu Universiti (YMU), Tianjin Foreign Studies University (TFSU), Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS), GuangXi University for Nationalities (GXUN), Xi’an International Studies University (XISU) dan Sichuan International Studies University (SISU).

Mazlina said that the Darul Iman Lecture was held in support of the National Reading Decade initiative. “The initiative is meant to help create a society with world-class knowledge in various fields,” she said.

In his lecture, Professor Awang said that the relationship between the Malay world and China

became clearer in the 7th century during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) and in the 7th-13th century during Sriwijaya Maritime Kingdom in Sumatera.

According to him, Buddhist priest Yi Jing stayed for six months in Sriwijaya’s capital in 671. During that time, Buddhism was learned through Malay Language. This marked the beginning of the meaningful history between the two countries.

Professor Awang also suggested several action plans in the form of comparative study projects on various aspects of civilisation such as values, philosophies, thinking, world views, arts, and languages between the Malay world and China. This, according to him, is for the purpose of maintaining the understanding and appreciation that exist between the two countries.

In addition, he stressed the need to double the efforts in the publication and translation of scholarly works in the fields of humanity, science, classic and modern arts. Development of online dictionaries should also take priority, he said.

Professor Awang said that education of language and culture must not be neglected. He emphasized that there should be more programmes between the two countries, such as higher education collaborations, student exchange programmes, exchange of scholars through chair appointments, and incorporation of each other’s language and culture into school and university curriculum.

Beside the lecturers from China, 250 people including from Thailand and Indonesia also watched the event.

# Summer School Lets International Participants Learn More about Terengganu's Uniqueness



Fifty-five international participants not only learned about the practical aspects of mathematics and computer science but also learned more about Terengganu's heritage and culture when they attended Virtual Summer School recently.

The Faculty of Ocean Engineering and Informatics (FTKKI) held the programme for eight days via online platform.

"This year's programme had to be run online due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, hence the name Virtual Summer School (VSS)," said Dr Maharani Abu Bakar, programme director.

The Summer School programme is one of FTKKI's international mobility activities, and it has now entered its third year, Dr Maharani said. This year, the theme chosen was Digitalised Heritage and Culture in Terengganu.

The participants were students from Universitas IPB, Institute Teknologi Sepuluh November, and Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia; CHRIST University, India; and Abdul Wali Khan University, Pakistan.

FTKKI Dean Professor Ts. Dr Che Mohd Ruzaidi Ghazali welcomed the participants during the online opening ceremony. In his speech, he said that he hoped the participants would gain new knowledge about mathematics and computer science and could appreciate Terengganu's beautiful culture and heritage.

The participants took a virtual tour of UMT after the opening ceremony. "They were able to see how UMT has positioned itself as one of the leading marine-focused universities," Dr Maharani said.

During the eight days, the participants completed eight modules. "The modules were designed in such a way that enabled students to relate Terengganu's unique culture to mathematics and computer science," Dr Maharani said.

FTKKI's mathematics and computer science lecturers guided the participants in finishing the modules.

The participants must also complete a group project. Each group received one of the eight projects, whether mosque architecture, ship building, Batik printing (a technique of wax-resist dyeing applied to whole cloth), top spinning, Keropok Lekor (Malay fish sausage), Payang Market (Terengganu's central market), Terengganu Drawbridge, or Islamic Civilisation Park.

Nine UMT students volunteered as buddies to help the participants complete the projects.

The participants presented their work at the end of the programme. "They met the project's objective," Dr Maharani said. "They were able to create videos using multimedia elements and video editing techniques to explain mathematical concepts such as mathematical modelling, geometrical modelling, and statistical modelling.

They also managed to explain the use of mathematics in economics and businesses based on their virtual visits to interesting places in Terengganu, Dr Maharani said.

The participants also developed an augmented reality application that is able to scan designated markers on Terengganu's map and show the videos participants had created.

All participants received certificates during the closing ceremony, while a selected few received best project, top quiz scorer, and best participant awards.



# UMT Gears up for National Day Celebration with Series of Events



UMT hosted 15 events in the weeks and days leading up to the 64th National Day celebration to gear up for the much-awaited occasion, and held several more on the day of the celebration itself in an effort to further increase audience's appreciation towards Malaysia's independence and their understanding of the concept of liberty and freedom.

One of the events was the National Day Speech by UMT Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, which took place on the day of the celebration.

In his speech, Professor Mazlan stressed on the importance of tolerance in fostering unity among the different races.

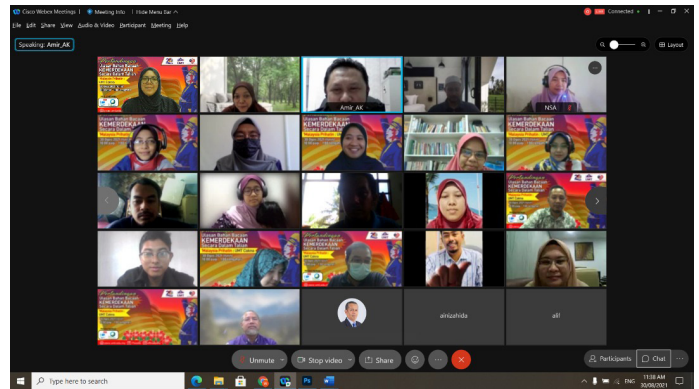
"Tolerance is what makes us strong," he said. "Therefore, in the spirit of National Day, let us embrace tolerance and become more caring towards others, so that we can further improve our unity."

Professor Mazlan also said that high degree of tolerance and unity and as well as "Love Malaysia" spirit among students is important as it sets a strong foundation for a university.

In conjunction with the National Day celebration, Professor Mazlan plans to hold staff assembly early September.

Another one of the events was the book review contest, which was held to provide UMT staff with the opportunity to write their reviews of self-chosen books or other publications that deal with the topic of independence.

The final round was held online on 30 August, during which five shortlisted contestants presented



their book reviews. Among the books contestants had selected were *Kenangan Tunku* (In memory of Tunku), compiled and edited by Kua Kia Soong, and *Sejarah Kemerdekaan Malaysia* (History of Malaysia's Independence), written by Hamdan Mohd Ali.

A suggestion was put forward to compile all the reviews and turn them into a book so that they would be conveniently available for other people to read.



An event was also held that involved an outside agency. UMT and local radio station TERENGGANUfm collaborated with each other to hold a special talk titled *Merdekakan Keluarga Kita* (Let's Liberate Our Families) on 31 August.

The talk focused on the concept of liberty in the context of family institutions, with the panel sharing their views on the meaning of independence, liberty, and freedom from the aspects of religious beliefs, morals, and entertainment.

The panel consisted of Dr Raba'Aton Adawiyah, Counselling lecturer from UMT, and Ustazah Asma' Harun, motivational speaker.

The talk was broadcast live on UMT official facebook and TERENGGANUfm channel.



UMT KEMENTERIAN PENGAJIAN TINGGI

Pelancaran  
**DIRECTORY OF EXPERTS**  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA TERENGGANU

SCAN  
HERE  
FOR THE  
BOOK'S  
DETAILS

**UMT's Directory of Experts (UMT-DoE)** is published to facilitate a more convenient exchange of expertise information. The directory contains details about UMT researchers and experts from various fields including fundamental, applied, and social science. It provides ample information to other researchers, organizations, or industries, enabling them to envision possible collaborations with UMT researchers and experts.