

» UMT Board of Director's Chairman Shares His Insights on Future Education

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Seven Uzbekistan Universities are Now UMT's Strategic Partners

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VOL. 4 Issue 1, January 2024

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Corporate Communications Office Universiti Malaysia Terengganu email : pro@umt.edu.my As the curtains draw on 2023, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) stands tall, with many achievements that reflect our commitment to knowledge, innovation, and community engagement. Our deepest appreciation goes to all our staff, students, and collaborators for making 2023 a very excellent and productive year.

UMT has been a beacon of success this year. We are proud of our 11 researchers who have been listed in the World's Top 2% Most Cited Scientists by Stanford and the researchers that have worked diligently to establish the Centre of Excellence for Offshore Renewable Energy with Petronas. UMT researchers are also involved in Coral Conservation projects with various agencies and have embarked on a Marine Scientific expedition during the LIMA23.



The institution's commitment to nurturing talent and fostering a dynamic learning environment has resulted in market-ready graduates. Our students have participated in national and international competitions and represented the country in various events. UMT is proud of our sailing team as they have achieved successes at the Royal Langkawi International Regatta and in December 2023 represented the country in Bahrain for the Kingdom Fleet and Match Race Event, winning the second and third placing at the meet.

UMT's impacts extend far beyond the confines of its campus. UMT has helped many communities to improve their standard of living by conducting many knowledge transfer activities. Amongst them are the Jungle School initiative for indigenous students and various activities for fishermen, youths, single mothers, and disabled communities.

We also extend our immense appreciation to our many industry partners, including Petronas, CelcomDigi, PTP, PKT Logistics, and MAPA Gloves just to name a few. With our industry partners' unwavering support, UMT has continued to excel in research and academia.

At the international front, UMT has embarked on many collaborations with agencies and institutes in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and the United Kingdom. UMT has organised many international conferences in 2023, including the International Forum on Antarctica and Climate Change.

As we bid farewell to 2023, UMT celebrates our past achievements, but we are also looking forward to strengthening our academics and research, expanding collaborative partnerships, and deepening our engagement with the community in 2024. Happy New Year to everyone and may 2024 be a great and prosperous year.

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## UMT Strengthens Collaborative Networking in China

Mohd Ihwan Zakariah, Vice Chancellor's Office Muhammad Ikhwanuddin Abdullah, Liew Hon Jung, Institute of Tropical Aquaculture & Fisheries



UMT has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with two institutions in China as part of the effort to strengthen its strategic collaborations with overseas universities.

The first MOU signing was with Heilongjiang River Fisheries Research Institute (HRFRI) in Harbin. UMT through its Institute of Tropical Aquaculture and Fisheries (AKUATROP) and HRFRI have been working together since 2017.

Through the MOU, both parties agreed to establish AKUATROP-HRFRI Joint Laboratory, implement student/ lecturer exchange programmes, and co-publish high-impact articles based on research focusing on natural species sustainability, climate change, and security of food from fisheries and aquaculture sources.

Both parties signed the agreement documents when UMT Vice Chancellor Prof. Dato' Dr. Mazlan Abd Ghaffar along with a group of university delegates paid a working visit to China in December.

On their arrival at the institute, UMT delegates were welcomed by the institute's top management comprising Prof. Dr Liu yongxin, Director General of Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences; Prof Dr Zheng Xiaohu, HRFRI Vice President; Prof Dr Li Shaowu, HRFRI Director; Prof Hu Gou, Head of Bioinformatic Division; and Prof Dr Chang yumei, Head of Molecular and Physiology Division.

The other MOU signing was with Shantou University (STU). Both parties decided to renew the previous MOU that had ended in view of the positive outcomes it had led to.

Through the new five-year MOU, UMT and STU will be able to continue working together on the conservation of

ecosystems and the environment and the development of food security in their respective countries.

UMT delegates were welcomed by STU Vice President Prof. Liu Wenhua, International Centre Director Dr. Gao Jian, College of Science Dean Prof. Zhang Yueling, and a group of researchers.

The launching of UMT-STU Joint Research Centre also took place while the delegates were at the Chinese university.

UMT and STU engage in research in a quite similar niche area. Both carry out studies in the fields of microplastic, marine mammals, marine ecosystem disasters, and the likes.

The previous collaboration between UMT and STU had led to several commendable outcomes. Among the achieved outcomes were the establishment of STU-UMT Joint Shellfish Research Laboratory, the successful publication of more than 100 articles in high-impact journals, and the implementation of student and researcher exchange programmes.

Efforts by both universities have also led to the establishment of a new international research centre called International Joint Research Centre for the Development and Utilization of Important Mariculture Varieties Surrounding the South China Sea Region at Shantou University.

UMT delegates also paid a visit to the Malaysian embassy in Beijing, where Prof. Mazlan presented about UMT's collaborations with universities in China since 2016. The embassy is in full support of UMT's effort and has offered its assistance to facilitate further collaborations there.

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## UMT Board of Director's Chairman Shares His Insights on The Future Education

Norhafizah binti Mohd Suib, Center for Talent Development & Innovation

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UMT staff especially the academics and administrators are advised to always increase their knowledge and skills in the latest technology such as the Internet of Things (IOT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve work efficiency and productivity, said Professor Dr. Mohamad Salmi Mohd Sohod, UMT Board of Director's Chairman.

To help the staff become adept with the latest technologies, UMT will try its best to provide facilities that can aid in the teaching and learning process, he added.

Prof. Mohamad Salmi was articulating his thoughts during the latest series of a special programme called *Bicara Nakhoda*, or Leader's Talk. He was speaking on the subject of the future of learning.

Prof. Mohamad Salmi's expertise is in human resource management and development.

During the programme that took place in December, he shared about the innovations and evolution in education technology nowadays. He also shared about the challenges of post-Covid 19 in education for students, lecturers, and education institutions.



*Bicara Nakhoda* is a special programme created to foster a synergistic relationship between UMT staff and members of UMT Board of Directors. It also serves as a medium for UMT staff to interact with the Board of Director's members who have expertise and experience in various areas. Through the programme, UMT staff is given exposure on current issues and advised on managing future challenges and changes.

The programme is organized by the Centre for Talent Development and Innovation in collaboration with the Corporate Communications Office and the Digital Ecosystem Centre.

Held at UMT Convention Centre, the latest edition *Bicara Nakhoda* was attended by all segments of the UMT community, including the university's top management, senior officers, professors, deputy deans, deputy directors, heads of programme, and staff. The event was also aired online through Webex.

Prof. Muhamad Salmi was appointed as UMT Board of Director's Chairman in July 2023. He replaced Tan Sri Dato' Sri Shamsul Azhar Abbas, whose tenure as chairman ended in May.



## Seven Uzbekistan Universities are Now UMT's Strategic Partners

Dr. Mohd Ihwan Zakariah, Vice Chancellor's Office

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For the purpose of formalizing strategic collaborations with seven universities in Uzbekistan, a delegation from UMT led by the Vice Chancellor visited the Central Asian country in December.

While in Uzbekistan, the UMT delegation visited the seven universities. In Tashkent, they visited National Research University, Oriental University, and National University of Uzbekistan. In Samarkand, they visited Samarkand State University, Silk Road International University of Tourism, and Samarkand branch of Tashkent University of Information Technology. The delegation also visited Andijan State University in Andijan.

At these universities, the formalization of the strategic collaborations between UMT and each university took place. Representing UMT, Vice Chancellor Prof. Dato' Dr Mazlan Abd Ghaffar signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with six of these universities and one Letter of Intent with Samarkand State University.

The MOUs outline plans for student and faculty exchanges, collaborative research projects, organizing of joint conferences and seminars, and sharing of academic resources between UMT and these Uzbekistan universities.

In addition to completing the MOU signings, the UMT delegation also engaged in elaborate discussions with the leadership and faculty of the seven universities to explore potential further collaborations. Some of the areas discussed included joint programmes involving

courses in English and information technology, a student exchange programme, and a faculty exchange programme. The discussions were held to help both sides better understand their strengths and identify concrete areas for initiating academic collaborations in the near future.

With the strategic collaborations with seven Uzbekistan universities formalized, the UMT delegation's visit to the country bordered by Afghanistan to the south was very productive and will help boost UMT's academic linkages. The partnerships established during the visit are expected to lead to increased student and faculty mobility between Malaysia and Uzbekistan and enable collaborative teaching, joint research, and knowledge sharing to take place. UMT and Uzbekistan universities are keen to implement the terms of the MOUs to derive maximum academic benefits from the cooperations.

Accompanying Prof. Mazlan were Prof. Dr. Zamri Ibrahim, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International); Dato Din Adam, Chairman of UMT Jaya Holding; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laili Haji Che Rose, Director of STEM Foundation; Dr. Raihana Romly, English Learning Centre; and Prof. Dr. Hamdan Suhaimi, Chief Executive of Malaysian Maritime Academy.

Also travelling with the team was Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zainidin Eshkuvatov, who is currently a lecturer at UMT. Dr. Zainidin is from Uzbekistan and was born in Samarkand. He is presently attached to UMT's Faculty of Ocean Engineering Technology and Informatics.



## **UMT Honours Its Industry Partners**

Amirul Salam, Office of Corporate Communication



UMT presented several awards to its industry partners recently to show appreciation for their contributions.

The award presentation took place during the latest edition of the Industry Partner Appreciation Ceremony (MPRI'23). MPRI is one of UMT's main events and is held biyearly. It serves as a platform for the university to foster its networking with industry players.

According to UMT Vice Chancellor Prof. Dato' Dr. Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, the awards were handed out to industry players that had helped UMT carry out its initiatives for talent enhancement, student development, teaching and learning excellence, and research and innovation breakthroughs.

Awards presented included Industry Project Award, Academy-Industry Award, Industry Partner Award, and CEO@Faculty Appreciation.

The CEO@Faculty Appreciation awards were handed out to several notable figures. They were Datuk Idham Nawawi (CELCOMDIGI BERHAD), Laksamana Pertama (B) Dato' Ir. (Dr.) Ahmad Murad Omar (OMAHAMS CORPORATION), Marco Neelsen (PELABUHAN TANJUNG PELEPAS SDN BHD), Wan Nadhri Wan Fauzi (BLUE ARCHIPELAGO BERHAD), and Datuk Seri Saripuddin Kassim (former Secretary General of the Ministry of Transport).

For the Industry Project Award, three projects were selected as the recipients. KENYIR Institute Entrepreneurial Programme (KIEPRO) is a project implemented in collaboration with Terengganu Family Development Foundation to transform the businesses of entrepreneurs through social media platforms. The project leader is Prof. Dr. Khatijah Omar.

Another recipient was the STEM Educators Bootcamp, a project by UMT and Tun Hussein Onn Teachers'

Foundation to promote STEM to the communities and schoolteachers around the state of Terengganu. Leading the project is Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laili Che Rose, UMT STEM Foundation Centre Director.

In addition, the conservation project called Ocean Hope also received the same award. The project is run in partnership with RHB Islamic Bank Berhad with the aim of improving ocean literacy among the community.

Prof. Mazlan said many of UMT's programmes have been able to be implemented due to involvement from industry players.

Smart Logistician, for example, is carried out in collaboration with PKT Logistics Group Sdn. Bhd. The programme facilitates industrial training and employment opportunities for UMT students.

Work-based Learning (WBL) is possible through participation from various players including Pelabuhan Tanjung Pelepas Sdn Bhd, Konsortium Pelabuhan Kuantan, Salihin, MHNEXUS Sdn Bhd, and Uniti Office Sdn Bhd.

Integrated PhD (IPhD) offers industry players in the field of maritime the opportunity to further their studies at the master's and PhD levels at UMT.

Industry Scholar Appointment is a programme whereby industry players are appointed to help the university improve its quality and relevance.

CEO@Faculty invites figures from the industry and public agencies to share their experience and expertise and offers UMT staff a six-month attachment at the industry.

To date, UMT has completed 95 projects carried out in collaboration with industry partners, involving industry research grants totalling close to RM7.6 million.



## UMT Students Show Off Knowledge on All Things Sailing

Mohd Hafizi Said & Noor Hidayah Mat Isa, UMT Sailing Training Centre



UMT students have once again demonstrated to those outside the university their competence to participate in international sailing sports and their ability to organize them as well.

Three UMT students have recently represented Malaysia at the 21st Kingdom Match Race Regatta, which took place in Bahrain 13 – 17 December. At the event held at Bahrain Sailing Club, Al Jazeer Beach, Zallaq, the team has managed to secure a silver medal for the Match Race category and a bronze medal for the Fleet Race category.

The three students were Mohd Faris Aiman Basri, Nur Ainul Izzati Zil Husham, and Nur Zulaikha Mohd Zafarin, all from the Bachelor of Nautical Science and Maritime Transport programme.

The UMT team successfully sailed through a series of competitions despite the strong wind that was blowing at 18 – 20 knots and the strong waves throughout the tournament that was also joined by teams from the other seven countries, namely France, Austria, Switzerland, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Bahrain.

The recent participation by the UMT Sailing team was its sixth at an international event.

UMT students have also shown their ability to coordinate international sailing events as evidenced by their success in organizing the recent Terengganu Monsoon Challenge 2023: IPT Challenge 5.0 (TMC 2023).

TMC 2023 was the highlight event in the calendar of sailing sports in Terengganu and the country.

The students who coordinated TMC 2023 are members of UMT Sailing Club. UMT through its Sailing Training Centre, the main organizer of the TMC 2023, has entrusted the students to manage the event as part of the effort to support the aspiration of the Ministry of Higher Education regarding empowering university students.

The Monsoon Challenge is one of the programmes under Madani Student Canvas that has been launched by UMT's Student Affairs and Alumni division.

A total of 160 participants took part in the four-day event, including international sailors from Thailand, Singapore, and India. Thirteen categories were contested, IPT Close, IPT Close Foundation 36 (Keel Boat), Optimist, Int 420, ILCA 4, ILCA 6, ILCA 7, RS One, Techno 293, Junior Rig, RC IOM, Byte CII, and Hansa for disabled athletes.

TMC 2023 was made merrier with the presence of Higher Education Director General Professor Dr. Azlinda Azman on the first day of the event. She was accompanied by UMT Vice Chancellor Professor Dato' Dr. Mazlan Abd Ghaffar, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation Professor ChM. Dr. Marinah Mohd Ariffin, and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Professor Dr. Mohd Izani Mohd Zain.

In addition to UMT Sailing Centre as the main organizer, TMC 2023 was co-organized by Terengganu Sports Council, Malaysia Sailing Association, Terengganu Sailing Association, and Terengganu Windsurfing Sailing Association.



## UMT Students Join in Green Conservation Effort

Shafie Umardi@Kamarol Bahrin, Student Affairs and Alumni Division



A total 120 UMT students recently joined in the effort to restore the green ecosystem by planting 300 Gelam tree seedlings in the Setiu district.

The activity was part of the Green Conservation programme organized by the Office of Student Affairs and Alumni, UMT, in collaboration with the Institute of Climate Adaptation and Marine Biotechnology (ICAMB).

The seedling planting took place at Moklah Gelam Farm, Kg Nyatoh, and at Wetland School of Setiu, Kampung Mangkuk.

Gelam trees, or scientifically known as *Melaleuca cajuputi*, have been known to have high ecological and economic values and thus provide high commercial value.

The programme was officiated by Muhammad Tarmizi Abdul Rahman, Setiu Chief Assistant District Officer and Land Adminstrator.

The programme was first initiated when two UMT researchers conducted knowledge transfer programmes to share with the community about what they discovered about Gelam trees through their related studies. Professor Dr. Noraznawati Ismail, Head of Bioinformatics research group at ICAMB, and Associate Professor Dr. Jamilah Salim, Head of Biodiversity programme at

the Institute of Tropical Biodiversity and Sustainable Development, hired students as volunteers to help with the programme.

The planting of Gelam tree seedlings will provide an opportunity for the Setiu community to earn additional incomes when they can extract oil from adult Gelam trees.

Also helping make the programme a success was the Student Affairs and Alumni Division, Universiti Sains Malaysia, which offered free dental services to the community and the student volunteers while the programme was running.

According to UMT Deputy Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Mohd Izani Mohd Zain, the programme was a joint initiative by six public universities, namely UMT, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP). It is part of Kanvas Siswa Madani@UMT, a high-impact programme developed by UMT for the community. Kanvas Siswa Madani was launched nationally on 14 November 2023 by Director General of Higher Education Minsitry.

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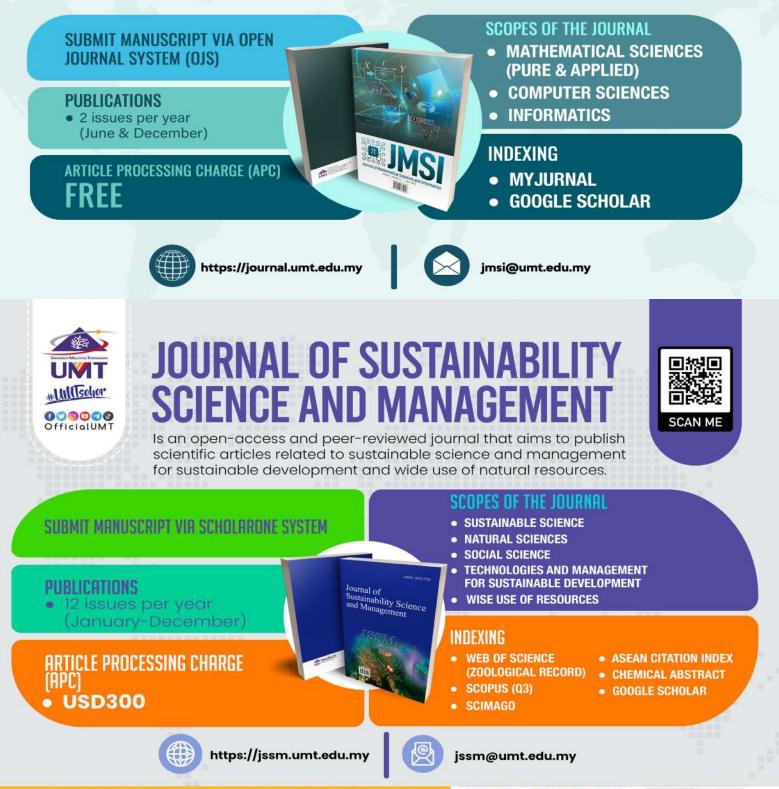
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