

SAKURAYA :

STRENGTHENING CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND JAPAN

By : Ms. Nurul Alyaa Ibrahim and Dr. Mohd Nadzri Mohd Najib



On 25th February 2025, the Faculty of Pharmacy UiTM Pulau Pinang Kampus Bertam successfully organised an event named "Sakuraya: Learning Language & Culture (Sakuraya: Mengenal Bahasa dan Budaya)". This event, co-hosted with the Tun Abdul Razak Library (PTAR), aimed to strengthen the cultural and language acquisition between Malaysia and Japan.

The Faculty of Pharmacy, UiTM Pulau Pinang, Kampus Bertam was honoured to host ten students from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) and two students from Takushoku University who participated in this event.

Their presence at UiTM Bertam helped create an engaging and refreshing learning environment, enriching participants' experiences through cross-cultural exchanges. This biennial event was designed to provide an attractive platform to explore and appreciate the languages and traditions of both countries. Therefore, a series of engaging activities were conducted to promote language learning and cultural exchange. One of the significant activities was Explorace: Discovering the Malay Language, a task that tested Japanese students' knowledge of pantun, proverbs, and Malaysian history in a fun and educational way. It was an eye-opening activity that provided a whole new perspective on the beauty of the Malay language to them.



March 2025

Moreover, this event included a Japanese Language & Yukata Session, where the participants from UiTM Kampus Bertam learned basic Japanese phrases and had the golden opportunity to experience the traditional art of wearing a Yukata. This hands-on practical session deepened their understanding of Japanese culture.



In conclusion, the Sakuraya programme offered a unique and enriching experience to everyone and can serve as a model for future international educational initiatives, showcasing the potency of language and cultural exchange in fostering mutual respect and understanding. Lastly, the success of the Sakuraya event success was driven by the dedicated efforts of lecturers from the Faculty of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, UiTM Kampus Bertam staff, and local host families, including UiTM lecturers and the Penang community. Their unwavering support made the Japanese students feel warmly welcomed in Penang, Malaysia, and provided a comfortable environment for establishing cultural interactions between the two countries.