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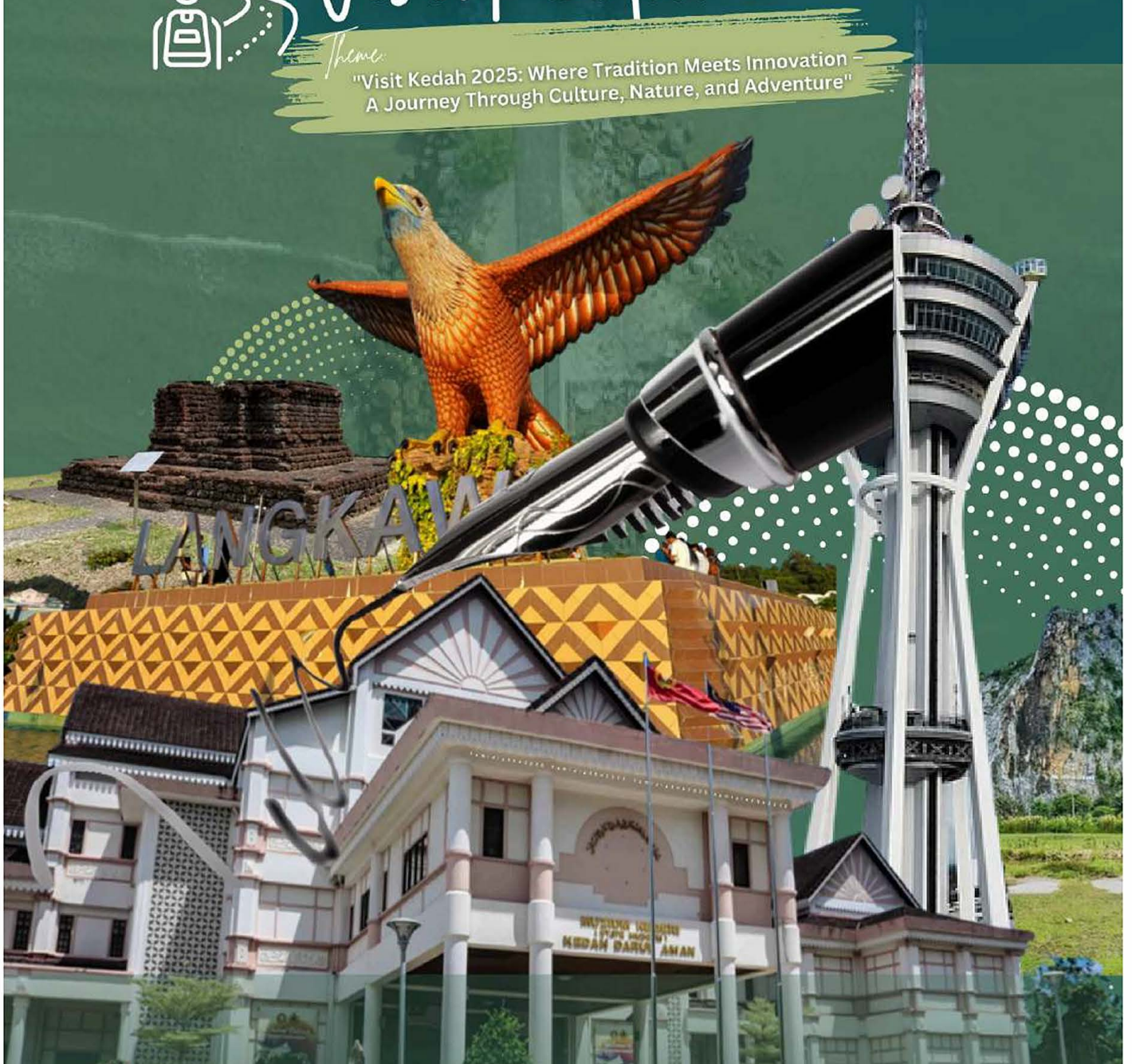


APB Kedah (e-magazine)

SPECIAL ISSUE EPITOME

Visit Kedah 2025

Theme:
"Visit Kedah 2025: Where Tradition Meets Innovation –
A Journey Through Culture, Nature, and Adventure"





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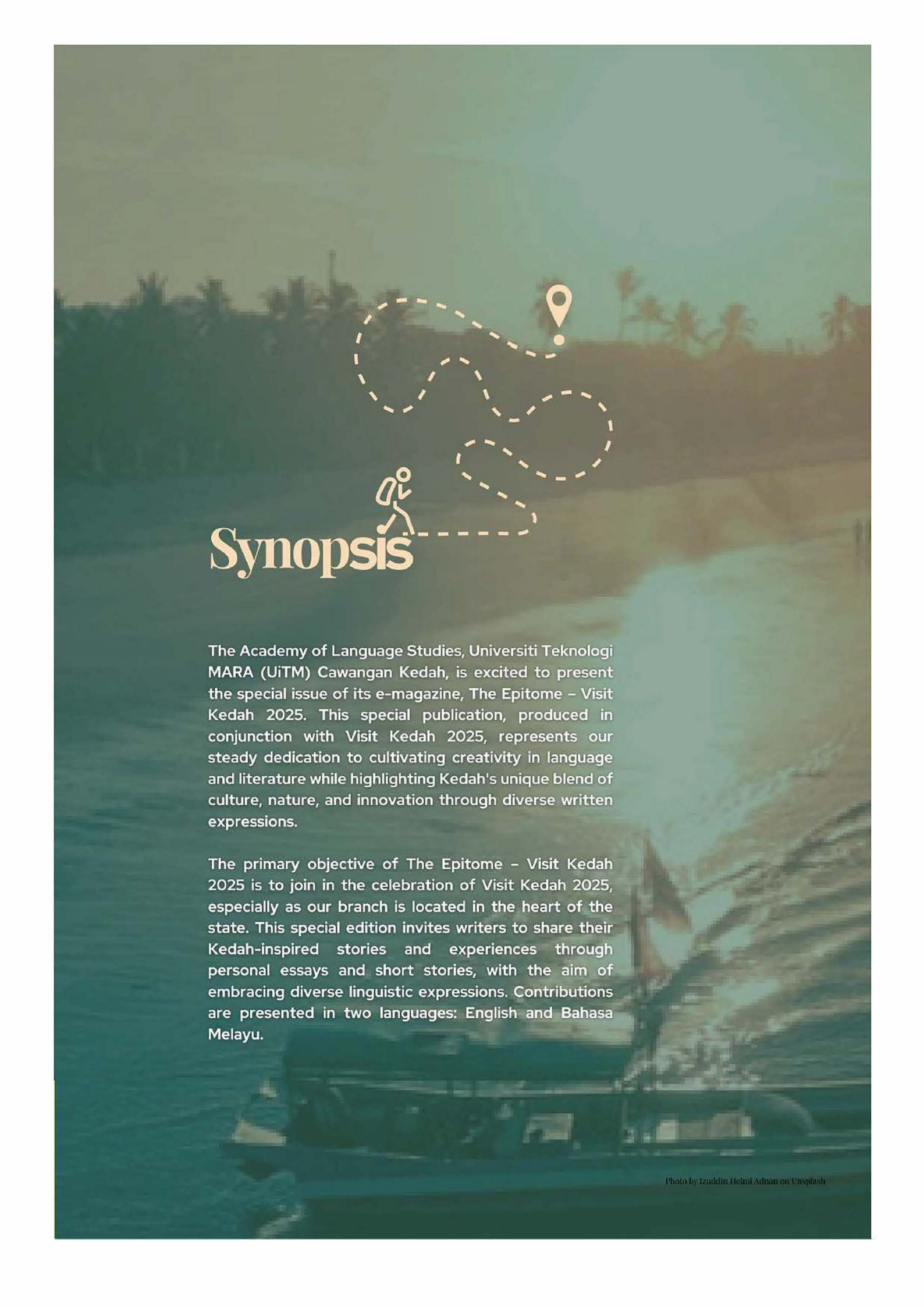
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Synopsis

The Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kedah, is excited to present the special issue of its e-magazine, The Epitome – Visit Kedah 2025. This special publication, produced in conjunction with Visit Kedah 2025, represents our steady dedication to cultivating creativity in language and literature while highlighting Kedah's unique blend of culture, nature, and innovation through diverse written expressions.

The primary objective of The Epitome – Visit Kedah 2025 is to join in the celebration of Visit Kedah 2025, especially as our branch is located in the heart of the state. This special edition invites writers to share their Kedah-inspired stories and experiences through personal essays and short stories, with the aim of embracing diverse linguistic expressions. Contributions are presented in two languages: English and Bahasa Melayu.

face of Kedah

Mr. Azlan Abdul Rahman
Head of Faculty
Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB)
UiTM Kedah Branch

Welcome to this special edition of Epitome, where we embark on an exciting journey through the rich heritage, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture of Kedah – one of Malaysia's most beloved and fascinating states.

As we look ahead to Visit Kedah 2025, this issue invites you to explore the treasures that await in this beautiful destination. From the serene beauty of Langkawi's beaches to the historical charm of Alor Setar, Kedah offers something for every traveller. Whether you are an adventure seeker, a history enthusiast, or someone simply in search of tranquillity, Kedah has it all.

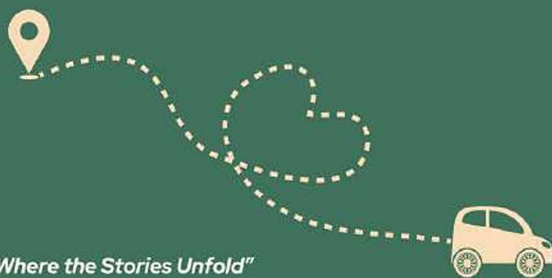
In the pages ahead, we delve into the many faces of Kedah, capturing the essence of its natural wonders, cultural landmarks, and unique experiences that define the state. Our stories, articles, and photographs will transport you to places where the past and present come together in perfect harmony – where lush green paddy fields stretch as far as the eye can see, and the rich flavours of local cuisine tantalize the senses.

Visit Kedah 2025 isn't just a campaign; it's an invitation to connect with the heart of Malaysia. It's an invitation to discover the unforgettable experiences that make Kedah a must-visit destination for travellers from around the world. In this edition, we hope to inspire you to plan your own journey to Kedah, whether it's to explore its breath-taking landscapes, immerse in its cultural heritage, or simply take in the warm hospitality of its people.

As you turn these pages, may you feel the spirit of Kedah calling to you – the call to discover, explore, and experience all that this incredible state has to offer.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting adventure. We hope to see you in Kedah in 2025!





Kedah, Where the Stories Unfold"

As the Chief Editor of Epitome, it gives me great pleasure to present this special edition in celebration of Visit Kedah Year 2025—an ode to a land where history, heritage, and heart live in every corner.

Nestled in the warm embrace of the northern Peninsula, Kedah is more than just Malaysia's rice bowl. It is a living canvas where time whispers through the ancient stones of Bujang Valley, dances across the rippling paddy fields, and echoes through the melodic drawl of the Kedahan dialect. Each tale we share in this issue draws its breath from Kedah's unique rhythm—where old meets new, tradition hugs the modern, and culture is not just remembered but lived.

From the misty peaks of Gunung Jerai, which once guided ancient mariners, to the shimmering flow of Sungai Merbok, where history quietly flows, Kedah's ecological richness is a story waiting to be told. Its mountains are guardians of myths; its rivers, keepers of memory. The lush rainforests, secret waterfalls, and wild orchids—all are pieces of a vibrant narrative woven by nature itself.

Yet, it is Kedah's people who breathe soul into this land. The warmth of pasar malam banter, the flavours of authentic laksa Kedah, the grace of traditional dance, and the way elders tell stories in that soft, endearing dialect—it all becomes poetry in motion. And in this special issue, we invite you to read, feel, and immerse yourself in the charm, wit, and wonder of Old Kedah and New Kedah alike.

Through creative fiction, heartfelt essays, and evocative poetry, Epitome brings together voices that sing of Kedah's mountains, rivers, food, language, and legacy. We hope this edition will not only inspire a visit but stir something deeper—a connection to the essence of a land that has long cradled Malaysia's earliest civilizations and continues to nurture its cultural heart.

Let the pages transport you to Kedah Darul Aman—a realm of peace, a sanctuary of stories.

Warmly,

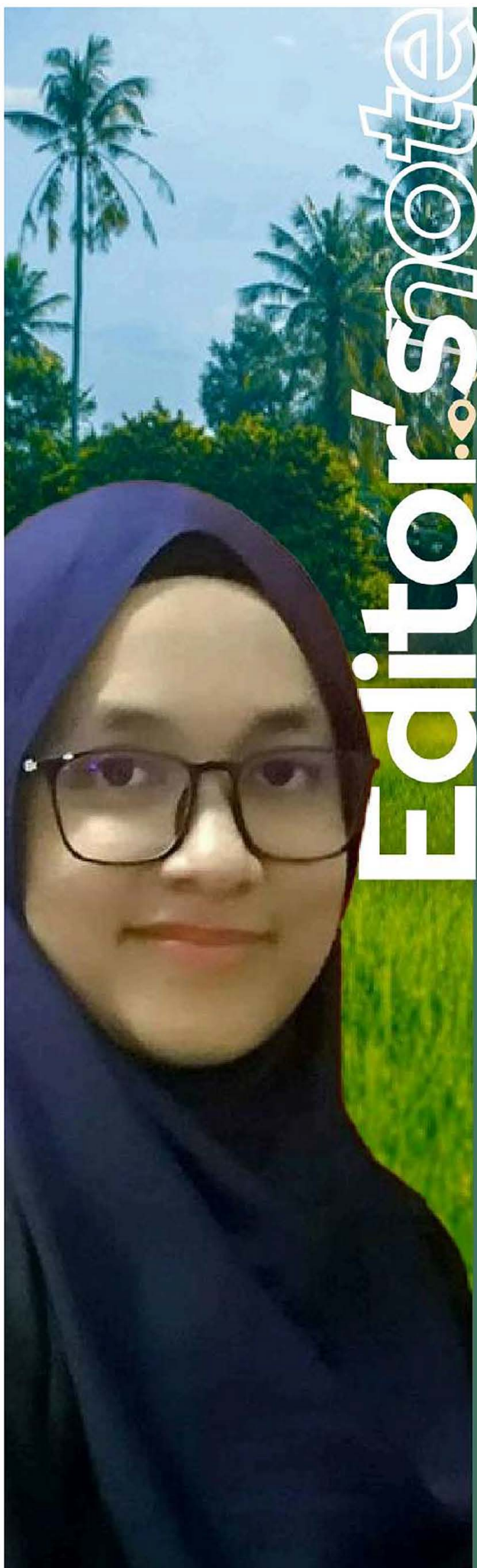
Razanawati Nordin

Chief Editor

THE EPITOME 2025

Editor's note





Editor's Note



It is with great pleasure that I present to you this special issue of The Epitome in conjunction with Visit Kedah 2025. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Head of Department for initiating this wonderful idea. As a proud Kedahan working in Kedah, I instantly agreed to be part of this project, knowing how close it is to my heart.

Reading the personal essays and short stories submitted by our contributors has been a truly enjoyable experience. I found myself smiling, reminiscing, and even imagining familiar places through their words. What makes this issue even more exciting is that some contributors are not originally from Kedah, yet they have beautifully shared their own reflections and experiences related to this charming state. Their fresh perspectives reminded me of the beauty I sometimes take for granted, having been born and bred in Kedah.

To all our contributors: thank you for your creativity, your voice, and for allowing us to travel through your narratives. Your stories have added soul and colour to this edition, and I hope our readers enjoy the journey through Kedah just as much as I did.

With appreciation,

Dr. Nur Syazwanie Mansor

Chief Editor, The Epitome
A Proud Kedahan

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CULINARY & EXPLORATION







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Of Roti, Cekelat & Peknga

I am not a Kedahan, but I spent about 16 good years of my life in Kedah, specifically in Kulim, Sintok, and Jitra. I have very fond memories there, and these places will forever be etched in my heart. I was there during my younger care-free days as a student and my more mature days as a wife, mother and lecturer. There is so much that I love about Kedah – and yes, of course, the food.

I remember that Kedahans call biscuits as roti (which is bread to non-Kedahans), and sweets as cekelat (or chocolates to the rest of Malaysians). So one may ask, if biscuits are called roti, then what do you call bread? Well, we still call them roti la...hahaa. There are many kinds of roti in Kedah then – the cream crackers biscuits are called roti empat segi, the marie biscuits are known as roti merie, and the sandwich loaf is generally known as roti gardenia (so much so for a brand name being generalized), or just roti.

Initially I was confused when someone said – “makanlah roti tu, cicah ayaq teh” – as there is clearly no bread in sight. But gradually, I learn to use the ‘right’ term when going to the grocery shops buying biscuits or bread. Speaking of bread, there is a very popular bread factory in Jitra – Roti Suria – which produces breads and cakes at very affordable prices. Roti Suria is still a prevalent name in Kedah, with more products, of course. Other popular homegrown brands in Kedah include Rempah Kari Cap O from Alor Setar, and Kopi Cap Gantang from Baling.



As for sweets, all kinds of sweets are known as cekelat. So, what about chocolates then, what do you call them? Of course we call them cekelat as well. Somehow, we just know which cekelat is which!

Kedahans call chili as cabai. Well, not so much of a confusion here as it is a different word altogether. And what do we call the kicap or soysauce? Toyue. I do not actually know the correct spelling, but somehow it is pronounced as toyue or toyu. I learnt this word from my children's babysitter, as my eldest child just has to have kicap with his rice.

And there is also a dish called peknga. Guess what it is? It is actually lempeng (or the simple Malay pancake made from flour and water as the basic ingredients). I asked my children's babysitter of the origin of the word and she said it is because in the process of cooking, the batter is sort of being stuck to the pan (tempek di belanga). What a creative way of coming up with the acronym, right?

There are, of course, many other glorious foods, like laksa Teluk Kechai which is very famous there. Teluk Kechai is a place located in Alor Setar; so I guess laksa Teluk Kechai kind of originated from there, and people have used the term laksa Teluk Kechai as a selling point. An interesting fact about laksa is that almost every region or state in Malaysia has its own version of laksa available – for example, we have laksa Kedah, laksa Penang, laksa Johor, laksa Sarawak, laksa Kelantan, and even laksa Siam. While the difference between certain versions of laksa is easily distinguishable – like laksa Johor, which uses spaghetti, and laksa Kelantan with its white-coloured gravy; I had not been able to differentiate the difference between laksa Kedah and laksa Penang during my early years there... what's more, laksa Teluk Kechai. Oh my! But as time passed by; yes, I became more appreciative of the distinctive taste of laksa Teluk Kechai, which makes it so famous.

Now, after about 16 years of leaving Kedah, there are still times that I still crave for simple peknga coupled with strong black coffee. Or calling all biscuits and bread as roti, and all kinds of sweets as cekelat.



Kopi Cap Gantang is still a permanent item at home



Junaidah Hanim Ahmad obtained her Bachelor of Accountancy (Hons) degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah and her Master's degree in Accounting and Financial Management from the University of Essex, United Kingdom. Upon her graduation, she served Universiti Utara Malaysia for about eight years before joining UiTM Cawangan Kelantan. She is now a senior lecturer specializing in Management Accounting, Strategic Management, and Finance. Beyond her primary teaching and research interests, she enjoys travelling and appreciates diverse cultures, languages and slangs, food, and way of life of others.





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