



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

FACULTY OF MEDICINE UiTM

MED BULL

NO.4/2023



eISSN 2805-4628



9 7 7 2 8 0 5 4 6 2 0 0 0

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EXPLORING COLLABORATIONS: UiTM'S ACADEMIC VISIT TO UNIVERSITAS ABDURRAB (UNIVRAB), PEKANBARU, INDONESIA

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On 15th October 2023, three Senior Lecturers from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, UiTM, embarked on a fruitful academic trip to Universitas Abdurrah (UNIVRAB) in Pekanbaru, Riau, Indonesia. The delegation also included four Year 2 MBBS students specifically chosen for their academic excellence for an Elective Project abroad, supported by UiTM funding.



Upon arrival, the lecturers - Dr. Wan Nor I'zzah Wan Mohamad Zain, Dr. Amirah Abdul Rahman, and Dr. Chua Yung An - and the students - Nurul 'Atikah Rozali, Nurzafirah Fairuz Zamer, Safia Zuhaira Zulhazmi, and Nuraneesa Aqilla Ahmad Radzuan - were warmly greeted by UNIVRAB representatives Mr. Wahyu Ramadhan and Miss Sabrina Hayati who are lecturers from the Department of Biochemistry, Fakultas Kedokteran, UNIVRAB, as well as UNIVRAB Rector Professor Dr. Susi Endrini.



The day began with a welcoming ceremony at Rumah Adat, Kampus II UNIVRAB. The ceremony featured introductory speeches from representatives of both universities, followed by a traditional Indonesian gurindam sung by a medical student from UNIVRAB. The ceremony continued as UiTM students presented an engaging montage video showcasing the Faculty of Medicine, UiTM. After the ceremony, all delegates were escorted to a nearby hotel by UNIVRAB transports.



On 16th October, the academic engagement unfolded with Dr. Amirah Abdul Rahman delivering a guest lecture on "Introduction to Biology and Molecular Medicine" to Medical Laboratory Technology students. Simultaneously, Dr. Chua Yung An presented "Introduction to Biochemistry" to Midwifery students, moderated by Ibu Hotmauli, Head of the Midwifery Programme. Afterward, everyone gathered in Rumah Adat for Dr. Wan Nor I'zzah's Public Lecture on "Demystifying Lapatinib-Induced Diarrhoea in Breast Cancer Care," which was attended by UNVRAB medical students from Years 1 to 3.



The day concluded with a round-table partnership discussion, during which UiTM and UNIVRAB explored potential collaborations. This included the co-organisation of Biochemie Carnivale 2024 at UiTM, with participation from UNIVRAB. The discourse also outlined possibilities such as allowing UNIVRAB medical students to conduct elective programs at UiTM, facilitating UNIVRAB lecturer visits to UiTM, fostering research collaboration, and considering the supervision of UNIVRAB postgraduate students at UiTM.

The journey continued with an interstate trip to Universitas Fort De Kock in Bukit Tinggi, Sumatera Barat, accompanied by Prof. Susi Endrini, Miss Isna Wardaniati, Vice Rector 1 (Academic), and Mr. Wahyu Ramadhan. The delegates were warmly welcomed at Universitas Fort De Kock and were taken directly to the meeting room to discuss collaborative initiatives. Fruitful conversations ensued regarding future projects. The day concluded with a stroll through downtown Bukit Tinggi, exploring the iconic Jam Gadang.

Meanwhile, the UiTM elective students had a full schedule ahead of them. For instance, they had the opportunity to visit Rumah Sakit Dumai, attend lectures, and experience problem-based learning as part of the activities during their 3-day elective project attachment.

The academic journey concluded on 19th October, with the delegates returning to Malaysia, fostering stronger ties with UNIVRAB and exploring promising avenues for future academic collaborations. This visit further strengthened the already positive relationship between UiTM and UNIVRAB, as evidenced by the successful co-organisation of Biochemie Carnivale in 2022, laying a solid foundation for continued collaboration and future joint endeavors.