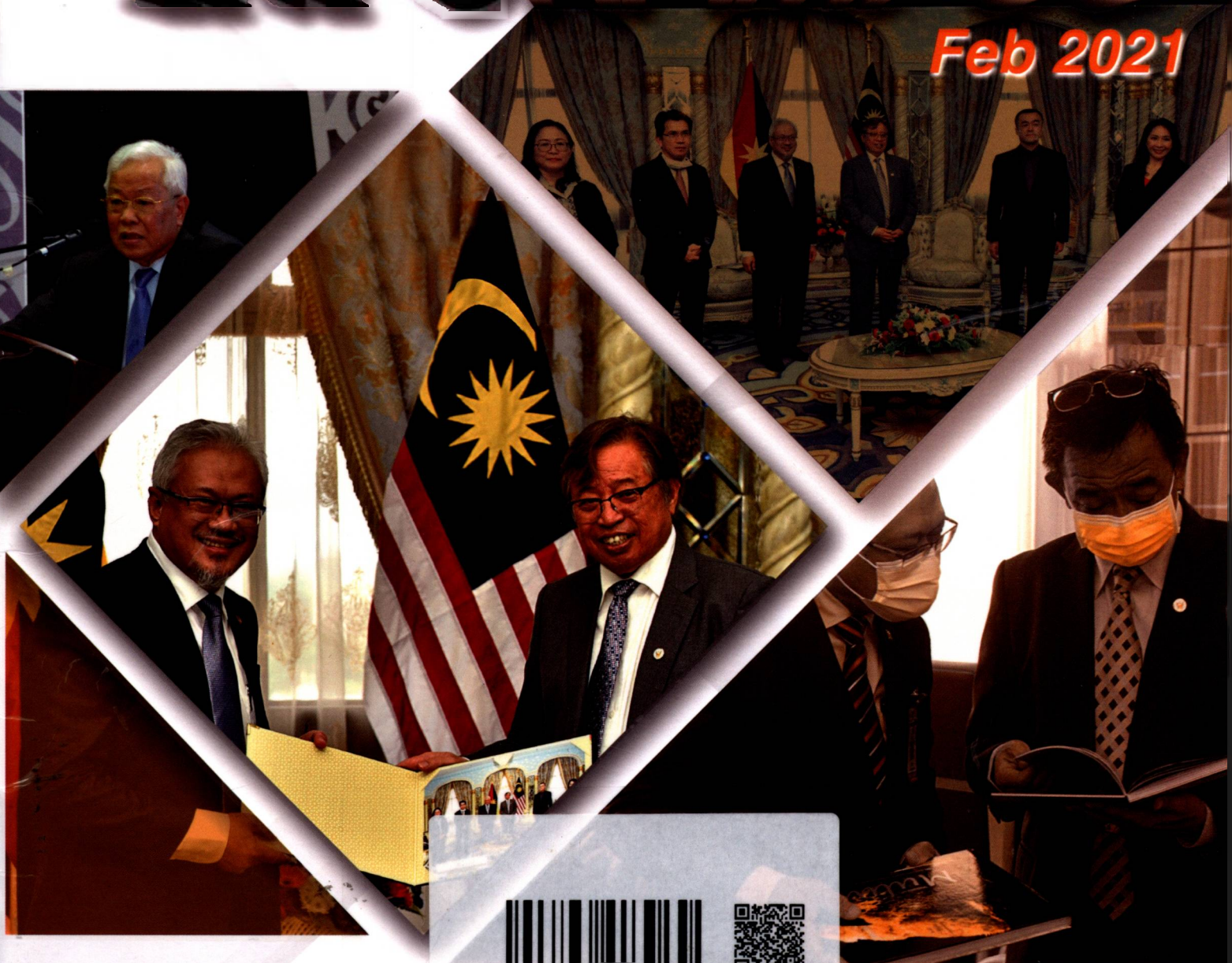


# INFOKAMPUS

Feb 2021



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Info kampus Feb 2021 / UiTM Cawangan  
Sarawak

**UiTM**  
**SARAWAK**

*pays courtesy visit to the  
Chief Minister  
of Sarawak*

*Courtesy Visit*  
**Datuk Hj Abdul Karim  
Rahman Hamzah**

**MOA**  
UiTM & STOMA SDN BHD

**KAIB 2020**  
*Soars to Greater Heights*

**innosTRE**  
*First Hybrid Conference*

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a happy new year 2021. With 2021 being the Year of Excellence for UiTM going along the theme "Pecutan ke Arah Kecemerlangan", UiTM is embarking on a journey towards becoming a globally-renowned university. In his Amanat Naib Cancellor 2021, Vice Chancellor of UiTM, Yang Berbahagia Professor Emeritus Datuk Ir. Dr. Mohd Azraai Kassim stressed the importance of quality education, global excellence and values-based performance as the key elements towards becoming a globally-renowned university. In this regard, UiTM Sarawak is on track in its vision to be one of the top if not the top institution of higher learning in Borneo. Although 2020 has left us for good, the challenges we faced and the valuable experiences gained from the Covid-19 global pandemic should give us greater confidence to face the uncertainties that lie ahead. We must move forward and brace ourselves for new, exciting challenges with the hope that we can achieve more when the Covid-19 pandemic is over.

My vision for UiTM Sarawak is to make her one of the best branch campuses throughout the system in the spirit of MA63. Our campus has always been at the forefront in terms enrolment, quality of its academic staff and student performance. Given the fact that UiTM Sarawak only gets one thirteenth instead of one third of the annual funding quantum, our campus has gone beyond the constraints of its financial resources. We are making sure that the campus infrastructure, notably our digital capability, is constantly upgraded and given top priority. With the current financial constraint due to Covid-19, we have been working closely with the State government for additional funding. We welcome the appointment of Yang Berhormat Dato Hajah Hanifah Hajar Taib as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department for Sabah and Sarawak Affairs which augurs well for UiTM Sarawak in her pursuit of the MA63 agenda, with the hope of more funding to bolster our enrolment and research. Our vision will also go in tandem with UiTM's Strategic Plan 2025 and Sarawak Vision 2030.

We are also looking into areas where we can champion particular thrusts such as Smart Farming and IT-based commercial ventures where UiTM Sarawak could bring significant impact on these initiatives. With 33,000 UiTM Sarawak alumni, UiTM Sarawak has a ready pool of expertise on which to leverage. Through setting up a database on our alumni, we can establish e-retail outlets as part of our efforts to assist the state and UiTM economically.

In the last five to six years, we have won a number of top state and federal awards. Just to name a few, UiTM Sarawak has won the prized Anugerah Kualiti Naib Cancellor three times, Anugerah Ketua Menteri Sarawak, Anugerah Kualiti Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri Sarawak, Pensijilan High Blue Ribbon, Anugerah Penyumbang Berita Paling Aktif (Unit Komunikasi Korporat) and more recently the Anugerah Akademik Universiti (AAU) won by 3 members of our academic staff for excellence in organizational leadership. Having won the Anugerah Ketua Menteri Sarawak and the Anugerah Kualiti Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri Sarawak meant we are among the best government agency in the state. In spite of the numerous successes we have achieved, more needs to be done in terms of internet accessibility in the hostels particularly in Samarahan Campus 1. It is heartening to note that all classrooms in UiTM Sarawak are internet-enabled while hostels in Samarahan Campus 2 are enjoying full internet connectivity. Needless to say, we are doing everything within our means to ensure that all our student hostels are fully- internet accessible.

With the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, efforts to enhance the quality of our physical infrastructure have slowed down considerably due to UiTM's financial constraints during these times. But rest assured we have communicated our intentions to Shah Alam for UiTM Sarawak to have a fully-functional ODL system where learning can take place anywhere within the campus apart from the classroom.

To a question of how UiTM Sarawak has fared in comparison to its rival tertiary institutions in the region, I must say that we are the few if not the only public tertiary institution that has won many top awards at the university, state and federal levels – a point I stated early on. We have a pool of quality academics in the university, many of whom have been engaged by the state government as training and public administration consultants and examiners for government servants on promotion exercise. This is evident from the RM2 million worth of consultancy research projects awarded to UiTM Sarawak by the Integrated Regional Samarahan Development Agency (IRSDA) on 15 September 2020. A team of researchers led by Associate Professor Dr Abang Zainoren Bin Abang Abdurahman has been tasked to carry out ground research to obtain feedback from the community on potential tourism activities in Samarahan based on available local resources and, to conduct the

Samarahan Tourism Development Lab which would share findings for the creation of sustainable tourism development plan. The team will also be responsible for the relevant capacity building and community development needed for the proposed projects in Samarahan.

This does not include the RM8,304,411.77 worth of research and consultancy grants received from 2017 to 2019. Certain state ministries have also engaged UiTM Sarawak to organise the Sarawak Innovation and Design Exhibition

(SiidEx) for the state government, thus providing further testimony to UiTM Sarawak's standing as a progressive tertiary institution.

As regards our strategies to enhance our graduates' capability and ensure their continued competitiveness in the job market, we are committed to ensuring that they are equipped with extra skills or the 'X factor' on top of their academic qualifications. Interested students from any faculty can register for certificate level courses in coaching, refereeing, singing, dancing and choreography during the semester holidays.

For UiTM Sarawak to remain relevant to the community at large, we are constantly bringing in new programmes while forging international collaborations with regional partners. To date, we have signed MOUs with six Chinese public universities, namely, Anhui University, Anhui Medical University, Beijing Wu Zi University, China Pharmaceutical University, Jiangsu University and Ningxia Medical University. We have also signed MOUs with other universities Spain, Indonesia and Thailand.

On top of that, UiTM Sarawak has also established a Halal Products Research Centre with Beijing Wuzi University and the Herbal and Ethnomedical Research Centre with Anhui Medical University, both of which were launched by the Right Honourable Chief Minister of Sarawak Datuk Patinggi Abang Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Abang Haji Open at INNOSTRE 2020. Besides exchanging ideas and knowledge on their shared fields, such collaboration would enable our students to touch base with reality. We hope that our graduates would one day be players in the industry through these halal herbal remedy production programmes.

On 10th March 2021, UiTM Sarawak will be starting a new program – Diploma Mutawwif, with a pioneer batch of 70 students. This program will train 'Mutawwifs' or tour guides not only for the Hajj and Umrah but also for halal destinations in Korea and Japan so that Malaysian tourists can experience halal food in these countries. These 70 pioneer batch of mutawwif undergraduates will have their internship in Mecca and Medina.

Under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Youth Sarawak, plans are underway for Kuching to become a transit point for pilgrims from Indonesia, Brunei and Peninsular Malaysia on their way to Mecca to perform the Umrah. Trained mutawwifs from UiTM Sarawak's Diploma in Mutawwif programme will play a crucial role in this transformation while Kuching could also benefit positively from the economic spin-off.

UiTM Sarawak has also set its eyes on the United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) on which UiTM's programme on SDG 2020-20 is based. In line with these goals and as part of their course, our students are required to engage the community till completion of their course of study. There is a need to elevate the local cottage industry to one with a global reach through community engagement where UiTM students can play a key role.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth and Sports, new tourism destinations will be explored and developed to enable tourists to discover what Sarawak has to offer. Apart from collaborations with state agencies, we are also working with the Federal Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture under Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy binti Shukri on various eco-tourism initiatives. The homestay concept has become increasingly popular among tourists and Sebuyau is now gaining reputation as the perfect gateway to a homestay vacation where nature and local cultures blend harmoniously to present tourists with real value for money experience. Fishing and crocodile watching will be among the activities promoted under eco-tourism in these new destinations.

With regard to UiTM Sarawak's response to the State's Digital Transformation agenda, we are poised to become an ODL-enabled campus as improve speeds and coverage stands out as our main concern. The first graduating batch of ODL this year will provide proof of our commitment to ODL and digital education. For students with internet accessibility problems, we will identify in cooperation with local leaders and assemblymen, community libraries, mosques and churches where students could access the internet to follow lectures. To ensure we meet the Digital transformation objectives, we have proposed that each alumnus contributes a laptop while each assemblyman who is an alumnus contributes 5 laptops for the benefit of students in the B 40 category.

Covid 19 has had a huge impact on enrolment. Nevertheless, we are looking at ways and means to ensure that UiTM Sarawak has its full time students, first year students, professional students and Distance learning students to sustain student enrolment. In fact, we are seriously considering the 'Lecture on Demand' concept to cater to students who have lost their job or are not able to attend lecture regularly due to work commitments. Through such concept, these students could access notes recorded on digital video platform at their convenience. Appointed lecturers will be tasked with handling queries and provide feedback to students. In this way, we hope to increase student enrolment in the campus during these challenging times.

On the other hand, we are also collaborating with Sarawak Energy Berhad which has made inroads into the Brunei and Indonesian Kalimantan energy markets, with the hope that students from our Engineering Faculty would be able to work while gaining invaluable experience in these countries. Alternatively, these countries could also send their students to UiTM Sarawak on short term study programmes. I am quite excited about the idea of turning UiTM Sarawak into a centre for Smart Farming, leveraging on our own experts from the Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology, Faculty of Computer and Mathematics, and Faculty of Electrical Engineering. The focus will be on producing cheaper, more affordable low-tech farming methods for our farmers.

In the final analysis, I wish all of you the best that 2021 could offer and together we stand against the Covid pandemic with the hope that UiTM Sarawak will go from strength to strength to face newer challenges and uncharted waters. Thank you.

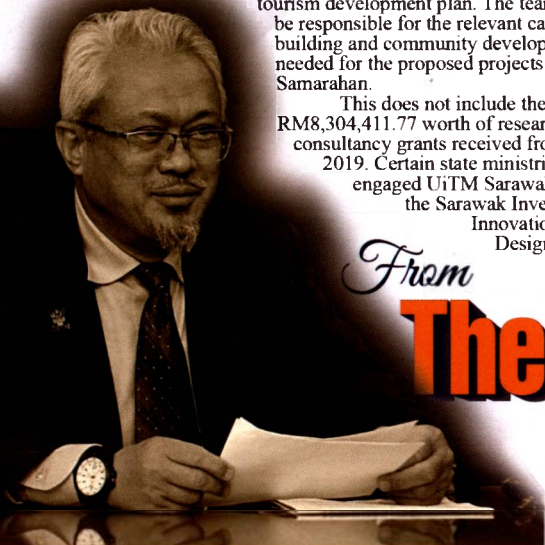
UiTM dihatiku.

From

The Rector's

Desk

Professor Dato Dr. Jamil Hj. Hamali



# Chief Editor's *note*

I take great pleasure to wish all our esteemed readership a happy and promising new year 2021. What a year 2020 has been with INFOKAMPUS publication having been affected quite a bit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Before the announcement of the Movement Control Order (MCO) on 16 March 2020, we managed to have the 79th issue (January 2020) published just two months before the pandemic. With the MCO fully in place from 18 March 2020 to 17 May 2020, there was a lull in publication activity as we began receiving fewer and

fewer contributions from lecturers and our usual contributors from the various departments. That being the scenario, publication of the July 2020 issue came to a halt temporarily. There was simply insufficient contributions in the way of articles or write-ups to go around for the July 2020 publication.

By about mid June 2020 up till beginning of January 2021, there was a upsurge in the quantity of contributions from our campus readership - thanks to the more relaxed Conditional Movement Order (CMCO) atmosphere, as people were getting used to the realities of daily life under the CMCO. People had more activities to report with regard to the Online Distance Learning (ODL), seminars and conferences, all of which were carried out online. We are

delighted to acknowledge such encouraging amount of articles and write-ups coming in from our campus citizen the last 6 months. In fact, there were just so many articles streaming in that we just had to keep some of the later ones for the next published issue in July.

It will also be worth noting that the 80th issue of INFOKAMPUS will see some new developments in terms of the cover page design, content layout and colour display. We hope that our readers would find the newly-designed INFOKAMPUS much more refreshing and motivating. Needless to say, efforts to improve our campus news magazine is an ongoing process and we certainly welcome constructive feedback from our readership in this aspect.

INFOKAMPUS would also like to welcome Dr Muhammad Fauzan bin Abu Bakar and Elzanie Nashazanie Ja'afar into the Editorial team. Dr Fauzan has been instrumental in providing the creative breath into the overall design of the improved INFOKAMPUS. Many thanks to our out-going member Mr Ryan Robert for his cooperation and professionalism during his tenure as member of the editorial.

Finally, my sincere gratitude to fellow members of the editorial for your hardwork, commitment and professionalism. It's simply been a pleasure working with you. I would like to thank Professor Dr Firdaus Abdullah, the Managing Editor for his insightful feedback on the final draft of INFOKAMPUS before it goes to the printer. Not forgetting also the management and citizens of UiTM Sarawak Branch for their continuous support and contributions. Once again, a great 2021 and stay safe.

**Dr. John Francis Noyan**



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