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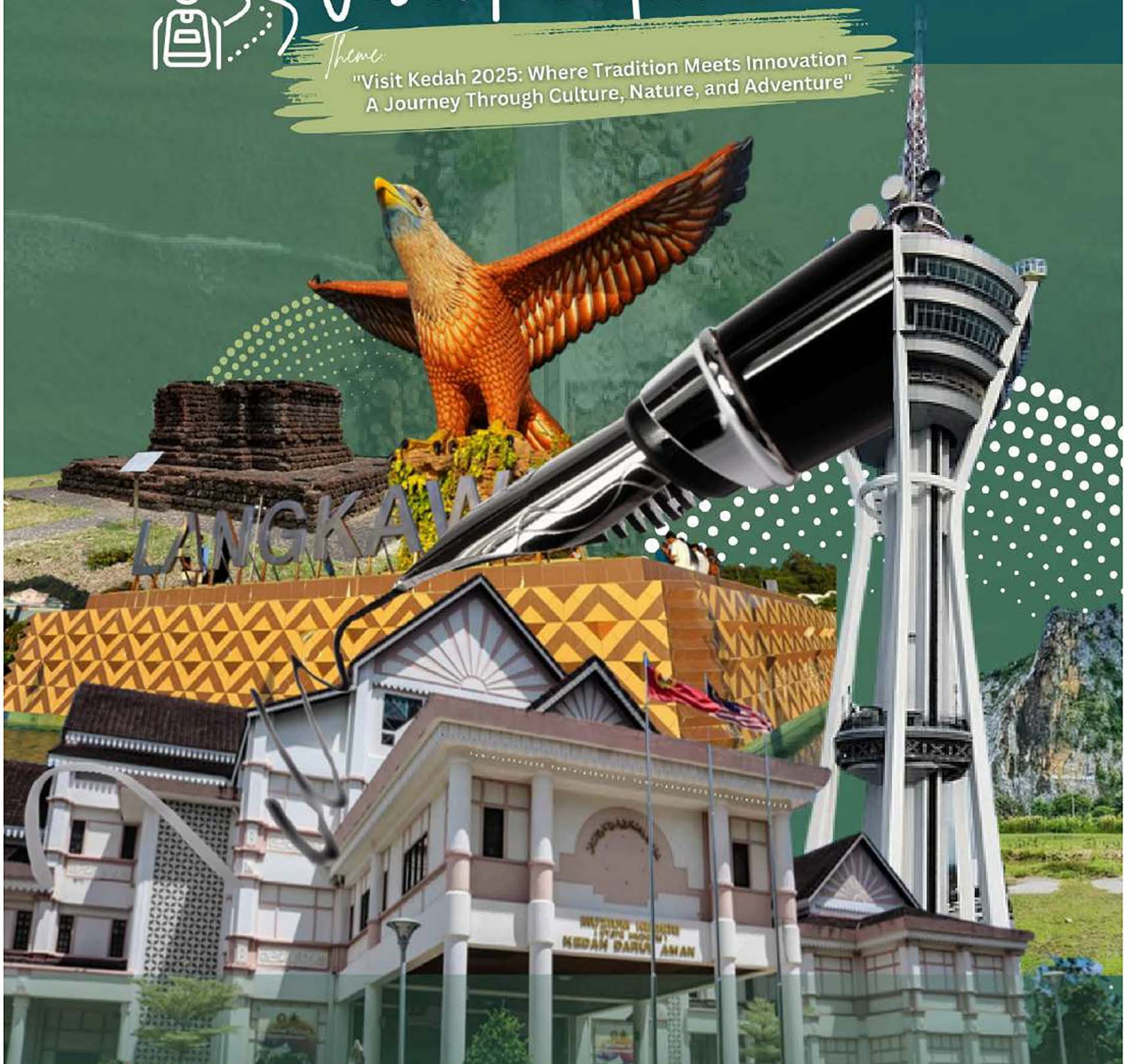


APB Kedah (e-magazine)

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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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,

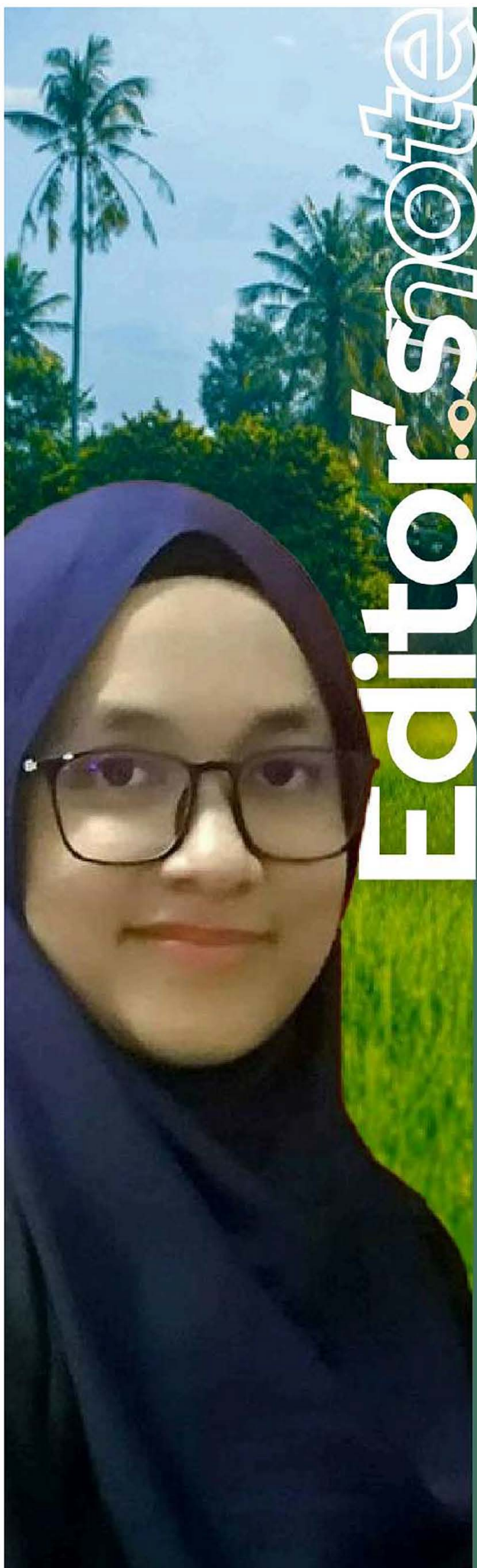
Razanawati Nordin

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







Flavors Across Borders:

Celebrating the Essence of Laksa Kedah

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A Borderline Delight

Kedah has always felt like a place brimming with stories, each woven into its landscapes, traditions, and, most importantly, its food. As the “Rice Bowl of Malaysia”, it holds a special place in the hearts of many, but for me, it’s the laksa that lingers the most. More than just a dish, it’s a taste of nostalgia—a reminder of how simple pleasures shape our memories. And if you grew up in the northern region like me, you’d probably agree—laksa is best enjoyed from a plastic bag, tied at the side (ikat tepi), with a straw sticking out. That’s how we knew we were getting the real deal!

Growing up in Parit Buntar, Perak—a town uniquely positioned near the borders of Penang and Kedah—I was fortunate to experience the subtle yet distinct variations of laksa across these three northern states. A short 15-minute drive in any direction offered a new take on the dish, with each region adding its own signature twist to the beloved bowl of magical noodles.

While the essence of laksa remained familiar, slight differences in ingredients and preparation methods highlighted how geography shapes flavour—including the laksa from Perlis, another northern gem in our culinary landscape. Take it from me; I’ve had my fair share of Penang’s bold and tangy laksa and Perlis’s subtly sweet version, and there will always be a special place in my heart for the laksa of my beloved hometown, Perak. But Laksa Kedah? That one stays with me. There’s a depth to its broth—a perfect balance of tang and savoury richness—that always calls me back for another sip. It’s the kind of flavour that settles in your memory, making you crave it even when you are miles away from home.



Tradition in Every Sip

Laksa Kedah isn't just about taste—it's a legacy passed down through generations. Unlike the rich, coconut-heavy Laksa Johor or the sharp tang of Laksa Penang, Kedah's version embraces the natural acidity of tamarind and the deep umami of shrimp paste. The broth, made from freshly caught fish, has a rustic charm that feels both comforting and familiar—like something a grandmother would have perfected over time. One of the dish's most distinctive features, in my opinion, is the rice noodles, which are smooth yet slightly coarse and soak up all the flavourful tangy broth. But what truly makes it unique, in my view, is the garnish. I find it remarkable that daun selom, a humble yet versatile herb, is included, as it perfectly embodies the essence of Malay cooking.

It is an inexpensive yet nutritious ingredient that has long been a staple in Malay kitchens and reflects a time-honoured tradition of making the most of what nature provides, ultimately proving that great flavours do not come from extravagance but from tradition, creativity, and a deep understanding of what makes a dish special.

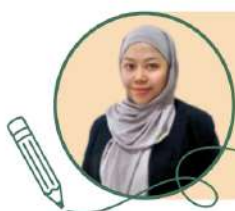


The author with a bag of pure joy – Laksa Jitra Mai. Just pour the gravy into the rice noodle bag, tie it at the side, add a straw, and we're in business!

A Northern Connection and Unification

Beyond just being delicious, Laksa Kedah is a dish that brings people together. There's an unspoken camaraderie among those who enjoy its flavours, whether at a bustling pasar malam, a weekend family gathering, or a quick highway stop. It's a dish that transcends state lines, uniting people from Kedah, Perlis, Penang, and Perak through a shared love for something familiar.

While laksa exists in various forms across all 14 states in Malaysia, I firmly believe that it is in the northern region where it truly serves as a unifying thread—binding communities through a deep-rooted culinary heritage. After all, you've heard of Laksa Utara (read: *Uttagha*), but Laksa Selatan or Laksa Pantai Timur? Not quite. And for me, nothing takes me back to where it all began quite like a plastic bag full of hot, aromatic laksa—*ikat tepi*, of course!



Salwa Othman wears many hats—ESL lecturer at APB UiTM Shah Alam, Canva enthusiast, and web-based multimedia instructor—all while keeping a cup of coffee within arm's reach. She's passionate about merging technology with education, with a keen interest on AI tools for maximizing productivity & creativity. When she's not in the classroom or fine-tuning a design, she's either reviving her succulents from yet another near-death experience or contemplating whether coffee fuels her work or defines her entirely.

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