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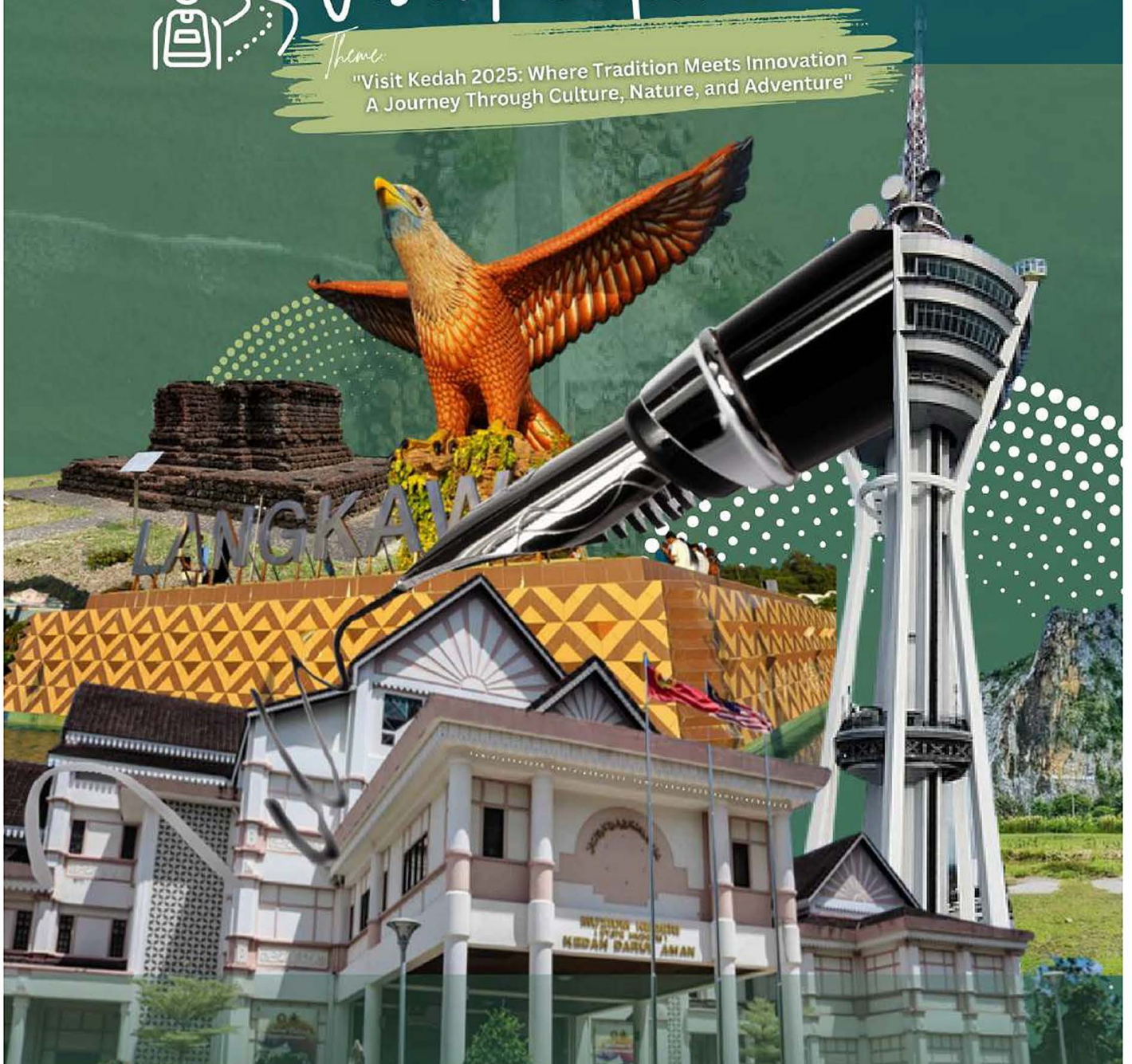


APB Kedah (e-magazine)

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
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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.

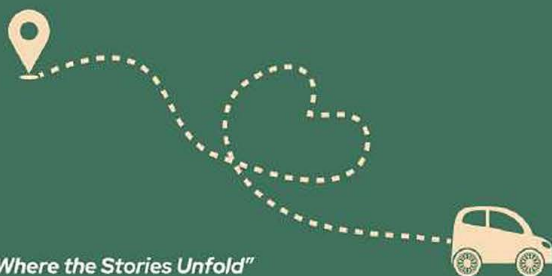
In the pages ahead, we delve into the many faces of Kedah, capturing the essence of its natural wonders, cultural landmarks, and unique experiences that define the state. Our stories, articles, and photographs will transport you to places where the past and present come together in perfect harmony – 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,

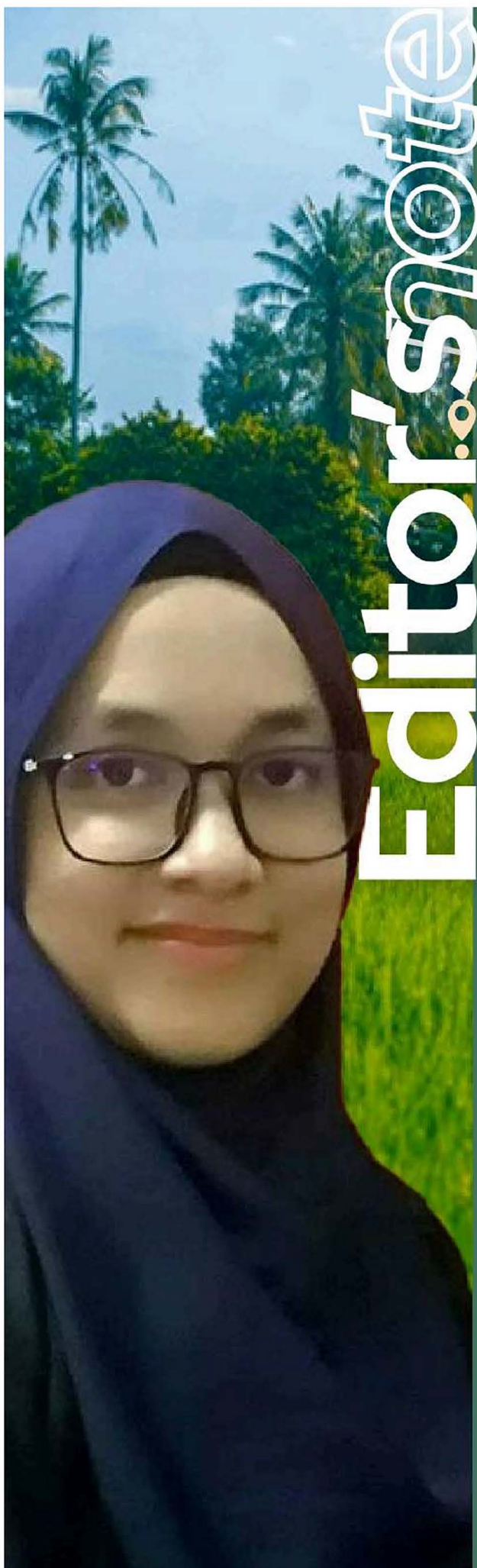
Razanawati Nordin

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





A mouth-watering prawn
fried rice with a scenic view
of Gunung Jerai



Azlan Abdul Rahman &
Syahrini Shawalludin

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Merbok:

A Paradise of Gastronomic Exploration

Merbok is a sub-district in the Kuala Muda district of Kedah Darul Aman. The name “Merbok” is fundamentally associated with a bird, zebra dove, an iconic species that is commonly seen flying freely in the area. However, the true meaning of the name “Merbok” is derived from the Langkasuka Malay language, signifying “Place of Declaration.” This name is in line with the historical values embodied by Merbok, which is rich in various historical elements, including the Lembah Bujang Monument and the discovery of early Southeast Asian civilization at Sungai Batu. Not only does Merbok carry historical significance, but it also offers a delightful array of visual, auditory, and gastronomic experiences that are appealing to both residents and visitors alike.

Have you ever experienced dining in the morning while being greeted by the sight of lush green rice fields, enjoying lunch with the majestic Gunung Jerai as a backdrop, and finishing your day with a dinner accompanied by the gentle breeze from the South China Sea? All of this can be enjoyed in Merbok, Kedah Darul Aman. What makes it even more attractive is that all these focal points are run by local entrepreneurs, offering affordable dishes that taste as though they were prepared in a 5-star hotel. Believe it or not, for just RM30, you can enjoy a complete meal from breakfast to dinner in Merbok, an economical culinary paradise for exploration!

Start your morning like royalty, as Merbok offers a variety of breakfast options to enjoy. A cup of local Cap Raga coffee paired with a piece of crispy coconut pancake, more commonly known as peknga, served with a dish of mackerel curry, will make for a perfect start to your day. Where can you try this? Head to the 3 Dara café at the Pekan Merbok junction, managed by Puan Halimah Said, affectionately known locally as Makngah. This woman entrepreneur's business is not solely profit-driven but is centered around sharing local flavors with her customers. For just RM2.50, you can savor an authentic and delicious breakfast that represents the “Rice Bowl” state of Kedah. If you're craving something different, nasi lemak for as low as RM0.50 and various traditional snacks priced at RM0.20 are also available in Pekan Merbok. Don't believe it? Come and taste for yourself.

The lunch and afternoon tea segments in Merbok are equally delightful to share. Imagine enjoying grilled catfish with lime juice and coconut sambal, accompanied by the soothing sound of a waterfall from the Tupah recreation area and the breathtaking view of Gunung Jerai. Every bite will be an absolute pleasure! Want to experience this? Visit Kedai Makan Kak Ton Tupah and bring RM6 to enjoy this budget-friendly yet delectable dish. Not in the mood for rice? You can also switch things up and head to Kampung Pengkalan Bujang for a bowl of Mee Kuah Tulang for just RM5. The rich broth, made from a mix of potato, sweet potato, and meat or shrimp stock, will be an unforgettable treat. After lunch, by 3pm, you can prepare for your next gastronomic stop. From Kampung Pengkalan Bujang, just a 5-minute drive will take you to Restoran At Sate Semeling, famous in the Merbok and Sungai Petani areas. The juicy, tender chicken satay for just RM0.50 per skewer and the succulent beef satay at RM0.60 per skewer are a major draw for visitors from as far as Penang and Perak. For RM6.50, enjoy 10 skewers of mixed chicken and beef satay, and complete your afternoon at Merbok.

Before heading home, round off your culinary exploration of Merbok with dinner while watching the sunset and feeling the sea breeze at Tanjung Dawai. With RM8, order a plate of fried rice with salted fish, an omelette, and a glass of iced tea at Restoran Anjung Warisan Tanjung Dawai, and complete your taste and soul exploration in this blessed land of Merbok. Once all your activities are done, you can return to your family and friends with stories of delightful, affordable, and local flavors. More importantly, you will have indirectly supported the local businesses, helping them continue to grow and thrive on their own.

**So, what are you waiting for?
Come visit Merbok! We have it all.**

The original Nasi Lemuni of Merbok



The succulent Sate Semeling



Azlan Abdul Rahman is a senior lecturer at the Academy of Language Studies (APB) at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kedah Branch, with an illustrious career spanning over 15 years of dedication and excellence. He holds a Master's degree in Communication, specializing in Science & Environment, alongside a Bachelor's degree in English Language Studies from Universiti Sains Malaysia. His passion lies in the art of creative writing, where he masterfully explores both English and Malay literary landscapes, with a particular flair for composing captivating poetry, enchanting pantuns, and thought-provoking short stories



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