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ACADEMIC VISIT OF SEMESTER THREE BACHELOR OF PLANTATION TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

By: Margaret Chan Kit Yok

With the financial subsidies from the *Tabung Amanah Pembangunan Akademik Pelajar (TAPA)*, a group of thirty-five Semester Three students from the Faculty of Plantation and Agrotechnology participated in a study tour from 10th to 13th December, 2015. The tour was led by Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan Kit Yok and Mr Amirul Bin Othman. The study tour was a fulfillment of three Courses: Agricultural Product Marketing (AGR513), Crop Diseases (AGR514) and Plantation Weed Management (AGR524) which aim to broaden students' horizons and give students an opportunity to relate their lectures to the real world situations.

10th December 2015

The group departed from UiTM Sarawak, Campus Samarahan at 6.30 am by bus driven by Mr. Yakup Bin Morni and En Ami anak Ngden. There was a stopover at Lachau, Sri Aman where the students studied the marketing activities of agricultural food products. We stayed overnight at Mukah Campus.

11th December 2015

The group met the Diploma students who were mustered for their roll-call at 6.30 am before the practical field activities. There was also a short tour of the Agropark in the Mukah campus.



Meeting with Students of Diploma of Plantation and Industrial Management at Agropark, Mukah Campus

On the way along Bintulu/Miri Road, there was a stopover at *Taman Pertanian Sarawak* at Sungai Sebieu, Bintulu. This is a legacy of Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan Kit Yok who was the first Project Manager when she was attached to the Department of Agriculture.

The tour continued to Similajau RRM Research Station, Malaysia Rubber Board in Bintulu where the students were given a briefing on



Taman Pertanian Sarawak, Bintulu-Miri Road



Similajau RRM Research Station, Malaysia Rubber Board, Bintulu with Alumni En Salihin Sekot



Exchange of gifts between Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan and Mr. Ben Baya Angang @ Agang, the Senior Manager

the current status of the rubber industry and the functions of the research station. The station aims to provide technology transfer of new clones and agronomic practices through exhibitions, training and R&D to smallholders, private agencies and the government. The Station Manager is En Salihin Sekot who was a student from the first batch of the Diploma of Plantation and Industrial Management in UiTM Sarawak. We spent one night at Similajau National Park, Bintulu.

12th December 2015

The group proceeded to *Ladang Tiga*, Sarawak Plantation Berhad in Miri and was greeted by Mr. Ben Baya Angang @ Agang, the Senior Manager, Ms Prisca Nicholas Panjangou, the Senior Human Resource Executive and three alumni namely Catherine Connie, Abdul Manan

Buserah and Mohd Zulfadly. The students were given a briefing in the field on how to diagnose the basal root rot of oil palm caused by *Ganoderma boninense* and the standard procedure of its control.

13th December 2015

The journey back to Samarahan campus took twelve hours starting at 5.30 am from Bintulu.

Park Guiding IN NATIONAL PARKS USING THEMATIC INTERPRETATION FOR CONSERVATION - The Chief Minister's Outstanding Park Guiding Award

By: Margaret Chan Kit Yok

The strategic roles of thematic interpretation in visitor management of national parks and in the context of tourism as a positive force for conservation and sustainable development are widely acknowledged as a necessary centerpiece of conservation and sustainable tourism. The approach is known to have the potential to influence visitors' beliefs and actions toward the natural and cultural resources, and because of its importance in positively shaping both the nature and quality of visitor experiences. In an effort to enhance the quality of park guiding services, Sarawak, since 2007 (through Section 7 and 8 of the state National Parks and Nature Reserves Regulations 1999) has developed and implemented a Park guiding Training and Licensing System, with thematic interpretation being adopted as a standard approach for delivering the park guiding services in Sarawak national parks. The Controller of National Parks and Nature Reserves appointed Sarawak Forestry Corporation as a training provider who then assigned University of Technology MARA as a training consultant to deliver the two-week intensive skill-based Park Guide Training Programme called "Certificate in Park Guiding Training Course". The training programme contained modules that include (i) theoretical knowledge on tourism and ecotourism, (ii) totally protected areas management system, (iii) national parks and nature reserves as tourism products (concept of tropical rainforests, economical and ecological values of plants, wildlife and geological landforms), (iv) risk management and (v) principle of thematic interpretation.

The Chief Minister's Outstanding Park Guiding Award 2014/2015 from the Sarawak Forestry Corporation launched by Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Adenan Satem in December 2014, was to recognize outstanding performances and contributions to the development of forestry, wildlife conservation, sustainable ecotourism and protect the attributes of Totally Protected Areas. Associate Professor Dr. Margaret Chan and her postgraduate student pursuing the Doctor of Business Administration, Victor Luna Amin from the Sarawak Forestry Corporation were among others from the tourism industry and the park personnel who were tasked to assess the nominated candidates. Two trips were made to the Mulu National Park in Miri and the Bako National Park in Kuching respectively. The winner Azhar Nor Mostapha Nor was announced during the corporation's 12th anniversary dinner on 6th November, 2015.



A short break during the assessment for the Outstanding Park Guide from the Mulu National Park



A stopover during the assessment for the Outstanding Park Guide from the Bako National Park



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