



VISA AND PASS | MOBILITY | GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT | ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

## Welcoming The New Deputy Director of Putra International Centre.

Prepared by: Farah Wahida Amran

Welcome aboard! i-PUTRA extends its warmest welcome to Associate Prof. Dr. Syazwani Idrus, who was appointed as the new Deputy Director from the 1st of April, 2023, until the 31st of March, 2024.

Associate Prof. Dr. Syazwani Idrus is known for her broad experience in international relationships, especially in managing student mobility. Associate Prof. Dr. Syazwani Idrus was a former mobility coordinator for the Faculty of Engineering from 2018 to 2020. She was responsible for managing inbound and outbound mobility students for the faculty.



Figure 1: The Deputy Director of i-PUTRA, Associate Professor Dr. Syazwani Idrus

## Deepest Appreciation

A heartfelt thank you to **Prof. Ir. Dr. Hasfalina Che Man** for her unwavering dedication and remarkable contributions to i-PUTRA.



Figure 1a: Former Deputy Director of i-PUTRA, Prof. Ir. Dr. Hasfalina Che Man.

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Through her extensive experiences and remarkable portfolio, i-PUTRA is optimistic that the appointment of Associate Prof. Dr. Syazwani Idrus will lead i-PUTRA to a successful journey while supporting and enduring the aspirations toward internationalisation efforts can be achieved. Again, we extend our warmest congratulations to Associate Professor Dr. Syazwani Idrus on her appointment, and we are delighted to have you in i-PUTRA.

## UPM Mega Raya Aidilfitri Celebration 2023

Prepared by: Farah Wahida Amran

On the 10th of May 2023, UPM successfully organised the **Mega Raya Aidilfitri** celebration involving 78 UPM Entities across 15 clusters throughout UPM, including the Bintulu campus in Sarawak and the I-AQUAS institute in Port Dickson, Negeri

### Raya Wishes

by i-PUTRA staff

#### Mdm. Ida Suhaila

Head of Global Engagement

Selamat Hari Raya from all of us at i-PUTRA UPM! May this festive season bring you joy, peace, and blessings. Maaf zahir dan batin!



#### Miss Junnainah

Administration Officer

Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri! Have a wonderful time with your loved ones.



#### Mrs. Farah

Global Engagement Officer

Selamat Hari Raya! May this festive season bring you closer to those you cherish.



Sembilan. The event was held to strengthen the relationship and bond between the UPM community. However, in line with the spirit of the Eidul Fitr, the university management has agreed to hold this celebration in moderation.

i-PUTRA also participated in the **Mega Raya Aidilfitri Celebration 2023** as part of the "A" cluster with ten (10) other UPM entities such as the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology, Faculty of Modern Language and Communication, and many more. Every entity participating in the event was encouraged to prepare some dishes for the guests to add to the jolly celebration. The celebration for the "A" cluster was held at PKPP



Figure 2: The UPM Vice-Chancellor, Dato' Prof. Dr Mohd Roslan Sulaiman, during his visit to the i-PUTRA Booth and connecting with the i-PUTRA officers

PutraCocu Hall, Student Complex UPM, with an array of sweet and savoury dishes available at every booth, such as *lemang*, *rendang*, *ketupat*, *satay*, and *laksa* prepared by the entities involved. I-PUTRA also took the opportunity to prepare a traditional dessert for the attendees, *Tau Foo Fah*, which is soybean curd with palm sugar syrup.

The event's highlight was the arrival of Vice-Chancellor Dato' Prof. Dr. Mohd Roslan Sulaiman, along with the University management to each cluster. The visit begins at 9.00 a.m., beginning with cluster "A". The vice-chancellor spent time at the PutraCocu Hall, greeting and mingling with the guests and tasting unique dishes for the event. The event was also livened up by students and UPM staff singing iconic Eidul Fitr songs. The celebration concluded on a high note. Hopefully, the celebration managed to bring the UPM community close to one another.



Figure 3: i-PUTRA staff with the Registrar, Mr Muhazam Mansor

# Assessing the Quality of Service at i-PUTRA

Prepared by: Farah Wahida Amran



Figure 4 : Discussion for a process that helps to organize proper management of internal audit.

An audit is crucial for every organisation. It helps the organisation have proper controls, governance, and risk management processes. To further reflect on the management and service provided at i-PUTRA, an internal audit was held from 13 to 15 June 2023 to assess the risk and evaluate and improve internal controls at i-PUTRA.

The audit begins on the 13th of June 2023, with a short briefing on the internal audit from the Head i-PUTRA, Madam Noraihan Noordin, with all i-PUTRA Staff. Following the briefing by the Head of i-PUTRA, the briefing continues with a briefing from the chief auditor, Ms Syaakiratul Hasanah Rossidi, together with the internal

auditors from i-PUTRA, which outlines the scope that would be audited. Then, the internal audit started with the scope related to the management of i-PUTRA and student mobility (inbound and Outbound Mobility).

On the second day, the internal audit continued with the management of the support services and the management of visas and pass by assessing, analysing, and evaluating the organisation's operations. The auditors looked into customer service, finance, training, equipment, infrastructure facilities and vehicles, human resource management, occupational health and safety management at i-PUTRA, and the management student and employee visa and pass.

After a thorough observation and evaluation, several areas of concern were identified, and further improvements will be made accordingly. All staff accepted the results with an open heart and agreed to perform improvements to address the areas of concern that had been identified. Hopefully, through these collaborative efforts, the services provided by i-PUTRA can be further improved moving forward.



Figure 5: i-PUTRA's staff has an internal auditor who oversees various functions including customer service, etc.

# i-PUTRA Visa and Pass Section Workshop with Public Universities in Malaysia

Prepared by: Farah Liyana Abd Halim



**PROGRAM PEMANTAPAN  
PENGURUSAN  
VISA DAN PAS  
UNIVERSITI AWAM  
MALAYSIA**

Anjuran  
Pusat Antarabangsa Putra, UPM  
& Jawatankuasa Pengarah Antarabangsa  
Dengan Kerjasama  
Education Malaysia Global Services &  
Jabatan Imigresen Malaysia

THE EVERLY, PUTRAJAYA  
27 & 28 Mei 2023

On 27th and 28th May 2023, the i-PUTRA Visa and Pass Section organised a workshop regarding the best practices for Visa and Pass applications for international students and their dependents. It was held at The Everly Hotel, Putrajaya. Most public universities have attended this workshop. Prof. Dr Ismi Arif Ismail, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International), UPM, officiated the workshop. The workshop is also a joint venture between the Immigration Department of Malaysia and Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS).

The first day of the workshop was filled with an informative talk given by Mr. Mohd Farha Md Ishak, Manager of International Student Management Services EMGS. The talk was merely about the documentation, the usual issues that arise, and how to address the issue to ensure the application is problem-free.

For the night session, the workshop proceeded with a forum led by Mr. Aizat Hisham Ahmad from USM as a moderator. The forum is about how to get the best resolution and will be agreed upon among all the public universities as the ultimate guide for each application submitted to EMGS and the Immigration Department of Malaysia. Cont. The universities were divided into smaller groups to obtain and



achieve a mutual best practice that can be practised in each public university.

The second day was equipped with a talk session with the Immigration Department of Malaysia, which was given by Pn. Nor Shima Izni binti Ahmad Shihamah, Deputy Director, Visa Pass and Permit Department, Immigration Department Malaysia, Putrajaya. During the session, Pn Nor Shima took the opportunity to remind the visa and pass sections of each university regarding the main guidelines along with the rules and regulations of each application and why the guidelines are there to protect the peacefulness of Malaysia. At the end of the workshop, the Director of i-PUTRA, Prof. Dr. Suhaimi Ab Rahman, compiled all the best practices discussed the night before during the forum session and shared them with all, including the EMGS and Immigration Department officers.

# Courtesy Visit from the International Islamic University (IIUM) with Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM) and Courtesy Visit to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

Prepared by: Farah Liyana Abd Halim



Figure 7: Courtesy Visit from IIUM with UPNM at i-PUTRA, UPM

As part of our efforts to improve visa services to the international community at UPM, i-PUTRA welcomed the delegation from IIUM and UPNM on the 21st of June, 2023. Ten (10) people attended the visit; eight (8) were from IIUM, and two (2) were from UPNM. The visit was led by Associate Professor Dr. Raihan bin Othman, Head of the International Visa Pass Section from IIUM, and Associate Professor Ts. Gs. Dr. Muhamad Azani Bin Yahya, Director of the Centre for Academic and International Networking, UPNM. The courtesy visit aims to observe and discuss the management of visas and passes at i-PUTRA, which includes guidelines for visa and pass applications and how the tasks were delegated among the departments. In the same week, on the 23rd of June, 2023, i-PUTRA paid a visit to the visa department at UKM for a benchmarking visit.

Welcoming the delegates from i-PUTRA were The Senior Chief Assistant Registrar/Deputy Director (Governance Academic), Mr. Basir Bahir, and the Senior Assistant Registrar for the UKM visa unit, Mr. Ong Chang Ee. The benchmarking visit begins with the opening remarks by The Senior Chief Assistant Registrar/Deputy Director (Governance Academic), Mr. Basir Bahir. During this benchmarking visit, both parties took the opportunity to share the best practices at the respective universities, while at the same time sharing some of the issues they faced in managing issues related to visa and pass. Through this benchmarking visit, we were able to exchange ideas on how to ensure we could improve the services provided to the international community at UPM.



Figure 8: Benchmarking visit to UKM

# Fostering Global Partnerships through International Engagements

Prepared by: Siti Hajar Najiyah Mohd Pauzi

In an increasingly interconnected world, the cornerstone of progress and development rests upon international collaboration. Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) fully acknowledges the pivotal role of this global perspective. To fulfil the university's mission to become a university of international repute, the PUTRA International Centre (i-PUTRA) actively pursues initiatives to fortify UPM's internationalisation endeavours. Among the strategies i-PUTRA employs to bolster these efforts is active engagement with a diverse array of international universities, institutes, companies, and organisations.

From April through June 2023, i-PUTRA welcomed six (6) on-site visitors and coordinated ten (10) virtual engagements with representatives from various universities, institutes, companies, and organisations across the globe. These interactions spanned across countries such as France, Netherlands, Turkiye, South Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, China, Kazakhstan, and Iraq. The broad geographical representation reflects the unit's commitment to expanding UPM's global footprint and ensuring a diverse network of partners. The list of international engagements conducted throughout April through June 2023 can be found below.

Medium	Type of Program	Country	Date	Institute / Agency
On-site	Courtesy Meeting	Iraq	The 03rd of April 2023	Embassy of Iraq in Malaysia
	Meeting	China	The 09th of May 2023	Beijing Diplomatic Service
	Courtesy Visit	Japan	The 11th of May 2023	Soka University
	Meeting	China	The 15th of May 2023	Soaring Falcon Sdn Bhd
	Meeting	Kazakhstan	The 19th of May 2023	M. Auezov University South Kazakhstan
	Meeting	South Korea	The 20th of June 2023	Jeonbuk National University (JBNU)
Virtual	Courtesy Meeting	Sri Lanka	The 04th of April 2023	Nawaloka College, Sri Lanka
	Courtesy Meeting	Malaysia	The 05th of April 2023	Great Southern Agency
	Courtesy Meeting	Vietnam	The 10th of April 2023	Van Lang University
	Courtesy Meeting	China	The 12th of April 2023	Pioneer International Education Inc
	Courtesy Meeting	France	The 12th of April 2023	KEDGE Business School
	Courtesy Meeting	Taiwan	The 14th of April 2023	Academia Sinica
	Courtesy Meeting	China	The 17th of April 2023	Xi'an University of Architecture and Technology (XAUAT)
	Meeting	Australia	The 12th of May 2023	Crimson Education
	Meeting	Germany	The 18th of May 2023	Begin Group
	Courtesy Meeting	Turkiye	26 June 2023	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University

Table 1: The list of international engagements conducted throughout April through June 2023

One notable highlight during this period was the visit of the Cultural Attaché from the Iraqi Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. This visit marked an important milestone in strengthening diplomatic and educational ties between UPM and Iraq. The engagement not only showcased the cultural richness of Iraq but also laid the groundwork for future collaborations.

i-PUTRA's efforts extended beyond hosting international guests and included discussions about the possibilities of future cooperation. These discussions explored various avenues for collaboration, including the establishment of dual-degree programs and joint-degree programs. Such initiatives hold the potential to enrich the academic experience of UPM students by offering them exposure to international educational systems and diverse perspectives, primarily through mobility programs, including semester exchanges,

short-term visits, and summer programs. These programs would enable students and faculty to broaden their horizons, gain international exposure, and contribute to a more globalised education landscape.

The proactive approach of i-PUTRA in coordinating international engagements is a testament to UPM's commitment to fostering global partnerships. By welcoming representatives from a multitude of countries and exploring future collaborations, UPM is positioning itself as a hub for international academic and cultural exchange. With its inclusive approach and ambitious plans for the future, UPM is poised to continue making valuable contributions to the internationalisation of education and research. These efforts not only benefit the university but also pave the way for a brighter, more interconnected future for all.



*Figure 9: Courtesy Visit from the Delegates from Jeonbuk National University to the Faculty of Educational Studies, coordinated by PUTRA International Centre (i-PUTRA)*



*Figure 10: Gift Exchange session between the UPM representative and the Soka University Representatives*



*Figure 11: Group photo between the i-PUTRA Representative and the Representative from Cultural Attache from the Embassy of Iraq in Malaysia*

# Strengthening Global Ties: Welcoming the ERASMUS+ Teaching Staff from Ataturk University, Turkiye

Prepared by: Siti Hajar Najiyah Mohd Pauzi

In a testament to the universality of education, Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) commitment to global collaboration was recently exemplified through the ERASMUS+ Teaching Staff Program. This initiative, conducted with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Science, aimed to facilitate knowledge sharing, enriching both institutions with fresh insights and perspectives; welcomed Dr Dilek Gurcayir from Ataturk University, Turkiye, from the 12th of June to the 16th of June, 2023. During her stay at UPM, Dr. Dilek was attached to Dr. Salimah Japar from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Science.

Beyond the academic realm, i-PUTRA, in keeping with its commitment to holistic international experiences, organised an excursion to Kuala Lumpur for Dr. Dilek. This excursion allowed her to explore cultural attractions such as the iconic Batu Caves and the vibrant Central Market. Through this outing, Dr. Dilek had the opportunity to immerse herself in Malaysia's rich and diverse culture, forging lasting memories and connections.

The ERASMUS+ Teaching Staff Program at UPM is a testament to the university's dedication to global education and cross-border collaboration. It strengthens academic ties and promotes cultural exchange, enriching the educational experience for all involved. As UPM continues to champion internationalisation, programs like these play a pivotal role in fostering a global community of scholars and learners.



Figure 13: Dr. Dilek together with her husband during their trip to Central Market, KL



Figure 14: Dr Dilek together with her husband during their trip to the Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTiC), KL



Figure 15: Dr Dilek with the performers at the Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTiC), KL

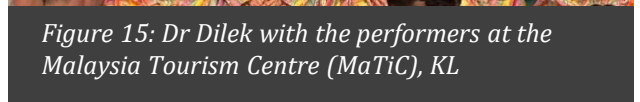


Figure 15: Dr Dilek with the performers at the Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTiC), KL



Figure 12: Dr. Dilek together with her husband during their trip to Batu Caves, KL



# Farewell Address to Our Beloved Mobility Students

Prepared by: Rahayu Ridzuan



Figure 16: Inbound Semester Exchange Students Farewell Ceremony Semester 2, 2022/2023 at Putrajaya

On this memorable day, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2023, we gather to bid a warm and heartfelt farewell to our cherished mobility students who have played an integral role in our inbound exchange semester program. As they embark on their journey back to their home countries, we celebrate their invaluable time with us and express our deepest gratitude.

The farewell event held at the picturesque Palm Garden Golf Club, Putrajaya, stood as a testament to the diverse and enriching experiences these students have brought to our campus. Their presence has indeed added cultural vibrancy and fostered a profound understanding of global perspectives among our students and faculty. Students from 11 countries, such as France, South Korea, Germany, Brunei, and Japan, who pursued their inbound mobility program at UPM for the Second Semester of 2022/2023, have undoubtedly provided a rich and multicultural learning experience for everyone involved.



Figure 17: Students enjoyed a Farewell Ceremony Semester 2, 2022/2023, held at Putrajaya



## Inbound Semester Exchange Student Semester 2 2022/2023

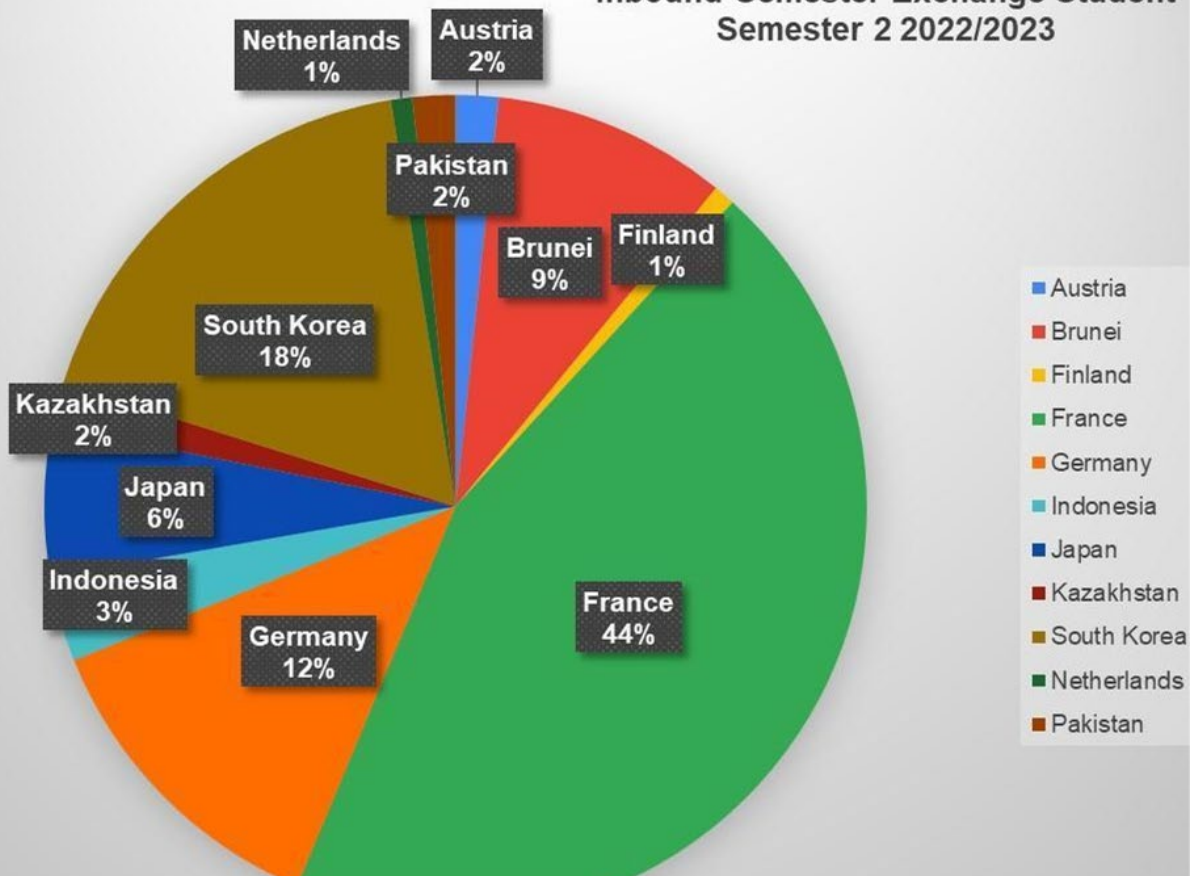


Chart 1: The pie chart presents the number of inbound semester exchange students from each country at UPM in Semester 2 of 2022/2023, with most students coming from France, South Korea, and Germany

Participation in mobility programs can offer students invaluable experiences and exposure to different cultures, academic environments, and perspectives. These experiences often lead to personal growth and an enhanced understanding of global issues. Moreover, they can inspire students to actively participate in global initiatives through international collaborations, research, or knowledge exchange.

By encouraging students to engage with international affairs and contribute to the transfer of knowledge and expertise globally, institutions like i-PUTRA can play a significant role in preparing the next generation of leaders and professionals who are well-equipped to address the challenges and opportunities of our interconnected world.

Prof. Dr Suhaimi Ab Rahman, the Director of i-PUTRA, in his opening remarks, expressed his hope that through this mobility program, the experiences and exposure that students have gained will pique their interest in international affairs and be more willing to get involved in

The transfer of knowledge and expertise internationally.

As part of the ceremony, several international students took the opportunity to share their experiences and reflections through the sharing session. One of the students was Yenglik Issayeva from Auezov South-Kazakhstan University, Kazakhstan. She mentioned, "I learned a lot. For the first time, I made a conceptual 3D model with my own hands, studied the ENVI-met computer program, updated my knowledge in technical drawing, participated in an exhibition, and was an assistant for special guests acquainted with the local flora and architecture".

As we bid adieu to our mobility students, we hope your time here has left an indelible mark on our community, especially yourself. We eagerly anticipate the day when our paths may cross once more. Have safe travels and success in your future endeavours, and may your global adventures continue to be as enriching as the time you spent with us. Until then, see you again.

# Experiential Learning through PUTRA Experience Short Mobility Programme

Prepared by: Nadia Zawani Hussin

Mobility programmes are one of the crucial components of the internationalisation agenda at UPM. Since 2017, we have received more than 12,000 inbound students worldwide and sent out 11,000 UPM students for an outbound study experience. A mobility program duration would start from a 1-day learning experience up to 1 year, ranging from summer programmes, academic visits, workshops, industrial training, and even a credit-bearing semester exchange program. Mobility programs that connect students to rich educational opportunities and promote global perspectives and cultural sensitivity have proven effective. Most students who study abroad return with a better understanding of themselves and their values and a broadened worldview.

At UPM, we aim to become a university of international repute that offers high-quality education and programmes. PUTRA Experience is a mobility program brand under the PUTRA International Centre (i-PUTRA), introduced in early 2016.

The Summer Programme at UPM begins with three (3) summer programmes offered by the Faculty of Educational Studies, Faculty of Forestry and Environment and Centre Advancement of Language Competence (CALC). The summer programme was designed to allow international students to experience a well-structured and diverse learning experience offered by the university, ranging from academic learning to cultural interactions.

After a few years of being put on hold due to COVID-19, the PUTRA Experience summer program was restarted with the Summer Program with the students from Kagawa University, which ran from 4th - 11th March 2023. The interactive and educational program was held in collaboration between i-PUTRA and the Faculty of Human Ecology. With 20 undergraduate students from various fields, the students explored the beauty of our green and visited the Malay Heritage Museum with our UPM Buddies.



Figure 18: Visiting PETRONAS Twin Tower bridge observation deck

The summer programme focuses on Experiential learning. The activities approach is based on the acknowledgement that knowledge is created through the transformation of experience by including peers to peers. Buddies UPM Association was selected to be part of the important element in the programme where they assist and facilitate throughout the programme; this allows students to construct their knowledge and experience to acquire new knowledge and skills with local help. It has become one of the innovations that satisfy the programme objective, which is to experience Malaysian diversity. It provides benefits, including practising learning rather than memorising, being independent, and improving students' problem-solving ability.

Following are the responses of some Kagawa University students on the summer program:

***“Terima kasih! Thank you so much. This programme was a great experience. I was happy that UPM buddies welcomed me warmly on the first day. From the beginning to the end, the buddies gave us support that was really too big for us, and we can only thank them. Meeting the buddies became important. See you guys.”***

***“I loved the modules in the program especially at SISFEC because I could learn the difference in vegetation between Japan and Malaysia, I was really happy that the buddies took us to the places we wanted to go and supported us with shopping. I really love the buddies and would love to see them again. Thank you very much for supporting us and making me like Malaysia. I love Malaysia! ”***



Figure 19: Students taking a group photo at UPM's iconic landmark

***“One of the best sessions is when students can cultivate international communication skills through discussions among students in the field. There is learning and awareness by seeing, hearing, thinking, and understanding different cultures from many experiences.”***

The programme outcome can be seen from the students' in-class learning sessions and the benefits it has given. At the programme's end, students respond positively to satisfying

learning items. Overall, students responded positively and agreed that the learning activities were satisfactory. They satisfy what is intended because the interactions between modules and experiences correlate. Student involvement and satisfaction can improve the quality of learning. Students' perceptions of the program are an essential parameter of the social and psychological aspects of the learning environment.

# Malay Folklore: Daring State Mousedeer

Prepared by: Siti Nursyakirah Saharudin



Raja Iskandar Shah was very fond of hunting. He had excellent hunting dogs. His huntsmen also possessed extensive knowledge and intuition of the forest. They could track deer. Looking at the tracks, they could estimate how big a deer had passed through a particular trail.

Raja Iskandar Shah was skilled in archery, and he was also proficient in spear-throwing.

One day, he went hunting in a forest. In that forest, there was a river called Bertam. The trees there were tall, reaching up to the sky.

In the forest, Raja Iskandar Shah released his hunting dogs. His huntsmen began to see the deer and wild boar tracks on the ground. Indeed, there were plenty of animals there. They encountered many deer and wild boar during the hunt, but none could be captured or speared. His attendants were also unsuccessful in catching any game.

“Animals in this forest are truly agile and clever,” said Raja Iskandar Shah.

Raja Iskandar Shah headed towards the clear river after tracking deer and wild boar in the lowlands and hills. As they pushed through the thick bushes, they heard hunting dogs barking on the riverbank.

“The sound of those barking dogs is different, my lord,” said a huntsman behind Raja Iskandar Shah.

The dogs’ barking grew louder. Raja Iskandar Shah and his attendants reached the riverbank. Suddenly, all eyes focused on a beautiful white deer. The deer leapt around like someone dancing.

Raja Iskandar Shah had already drawn his bow and knocked an arrow. He was about to release it.

“No matter how agile you are, my arrow will pierce your body,” Raja Iskandar Shah declared as he aimed his bow towards the deer.

The barking of his hunting dogs grew even closer. Soon, the deer faced off with Raja Iskandar Shah's hunting dogs. Nevertheless, the deer continued to leap gracefully.

Raja Iskandar Shah decided not to release the arrow. He and his attendants were amazed at the deer's agility. His hunting dogs tried to corner the deer while barking loudly.

However, Raja Iskandar Shah's hunting dogs were nervous about the larger deer. The deer kept leaping. Brave as they were, Raja Iskandar Shah's hunting dogs lunged at the deer, still leaping gracefully.

The attack of Raja Iskandar Shah's hunting dogs hit its mark. However, the deer was more alert and cautious. As it leapt high, the deer bent its hind legs. When its front legs touched the ground, the deer attacked Raja Iskandar Shah's hunting dog.

The dog fell and plunged into the river. The deer continued to leap, and upon seeing the dog struggling to swim to safety, it disappeared into the bushes.

Raja Iskandar Shah and his attendants were stunned by the incident. He then took a break, leaning against a soft and smooth-leaved tree.

"Even the deer is fearless; it would be better if this place became a state," said Raja Iskandar Shah.

"Indeed, that is true, your Highness," said his attendants.

"What is the name of the tree against which we are leaning?" asked Raja Iskandar Shah.

"It's a *Melaka* tree, Your Highness," replied his attendants.

"In that case, let us name this state Melaka," Raja Iskandar Shah declared.

After that, the state of Melaka was established. Melaka became famous and renowned under the rule of Raja Iskandar Shah and his descendants. Its people lived in harmony and peace in this distinguished state.



# Celebrations and Festivals in Malaysia

Prepared by: Siti Nursyakirah Saharudin

Malaysia, being a multi-racial country, has a variety of colourful and lively celebrations throughout the year. The culture in this country has become more colourful due to the various races in Malaysia. This newsletter issue focuses on festivals celebrated from May until August 2023.

## Wesak Day (4 May 2023)

Wesak Day, also known as Vesak Day, is a significant Buddhist holiday celebrated in Malaysia, as well as in other Buddhist-majority countries, to commemorate the birth, enlightenment, and death of Siddhartha Gautama, who later became Gautama Buddha. Wesak Day is not only a religious observance but also a time for Buddhists to reflect on the teachings of the Buddha and strive for spiritual growth and enlightenment. It is a day that promotes compassion, harmony, and goodwill among people of all backgrounds in Malaysia.



Figure 20: Wesak Day Procession in Penang

Source: Lo Tern Chern (2023). Wesak Day Procession Back in Penang after Three-Year Hiatus. *The Star*.  
<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2023/05/04/wesak-day-procession-back-in-penang-after-three-year-hiatus>

## Pesta Kaamatan Pesta Menuai (30 & 31 May 2022)



Figure 21: Celebration of the Harvest Festival (Pesta Kaamatan)

Source: Sinar Harian (2022). Sambutan Pesta Kaamatan. Sinar Harian.  
<https://www.sinarharian.com.my/article/204673/galeri/sambutan-pesta-kaamatan>

Pesta Kaamatan, or Harvest Festival, is a traditional celebration observed by Sabah, Malaysia's Kadazan-Dusun and Murut indigenous communities. This festival is one of the most important cultural events in Sabah. It plays a significant role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of these indigenous groups.

Pesta Kaamatan is not only a celebration of the harvest but also a celebration of the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the Kadazan-Dusun and Murut people. It promotes cultural preservation and unity while providing an opportunity for the wider community to learn about and appreciate the indigenous cultures of Sabah.

## Hari Gawai (1 & 2 June 2023)

Hari Gawai is a significant cultural and religious festival celebrated by the indigenous communities of Sarawak, one of the two Malaysian states on the island of Borneo. It is primarily observed by the Iban and Bidayuh ethnic groups but is also celebrated by other indigenous communities in Sarawak. Hari Gawai is a harvest celebration and a vital cultural and spiritual event that strengthens the ties between communities, generations, and ancestral spirits. It plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Sarawak's indigenous peoples.



Figure 22: Hari Gawai Celebration in Sarawak

Source: Sharon Ling (2022). Sarawakians happy to finally celebrate Gawai after two years of lockdowns, says Uggah. The Star.  
<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2022/06/01/sarawak-ians-happy-to-finally-celebrate-gawai-after-two-years-of-lockdowns-says-uggah>



## Hari Keputeraan Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertua Agong (5 June 2023)



Figure 23: The celebration of the Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertua Agong Birthday

Source: Foto Bernama (2023). Hari Keputeraan Agong 2023. Berita Harian Online.  
<https://www.bharian.com.my/galeri/2023/06/1110696/hari-keputeraan-agong-2023>

Hari Keputeraan Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertua Agong” is a significant celebration in Malaysia that marks the birthday of the current Yang di-Pertua Agong, the constitutional monarch and the Head of state of Malaysia. Hari Keputeraan Seri Paduka Baginda Yang di-Pertua Agong is a day when

Malaysians celebrate their nation’s monarchy and demonstrate loyalty and patriotism. It is an occasion marked by solemnity and festivity, reflecting the rich tapestry of Malaysia’s cultural and historical heritage.

## Hari Raya Aidiladha (29 & 30 June 2023)



Figure 24: A member of the moon-sighting committee observing the sighting of the new moon which marks the start of the Hijr Lunar Month, Dzulhijjah.

Hari Gawai is a significant cultural and religious festival celebrated by the indigenous communities of Sarawak, one of the two Malaysian states on the island of Borneo. It is primarily observed by the Iban and Bidayuh ethnic groups but is also celebrated by other indigenous communities in Sarawak. Hari Gawai is a harvest celebration and a vital cultural and spiritual event that strengthens the ties between communities, generations, and ancestral spirits. It plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Sarawak’s indigenous peoples.

Source: Bernama. (2023). Muslims in Malaysia to celebrate Aidiladha on the 29th of June. New Straits Times.

[https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2023/06/921566/muslims-malaysia-celebrate-aidiladha-june-29#:~:text=%22Therefore%2C%20Hari%20Raya%20Aidiladha%20\(%2C%202023%2C%22%20he%20said.](https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2023/06/921566/muslims-malaysia-celebrate-aidiladha-june-29#:~:text=%22Therefore%2C%20Hari%20Raya%20Aidiladha%20(%2C%202023%2C%22%20he%20said.)