

**KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN  
TARIKH: 12 JULAI 2015 (AHAD)**

<b>Bil</b>	<b>Tajuk</b>	<b>Akhbar</b>
1.	Exploring Arctic wonders	The Star

KERATAN AKHBAR  
THE STAR (LEARNING CURVE) : MUKA SURAT 11  
TARIKH : 12 JULAI 2015 (AHAD)

ZULITA MUSTAFA  
zulita@nst.com.my

# Exploring Arctic wonders

**R**OSZITA Mat Zin, 37, never thought that she would be selected by Yayasan Penyelidikan Antartika Sultan Mizan (YPASM) as one of two teachers from Malaysia to participate in the Students On Ice (SOI) expedition to the Arctic from July 27 to Aug 10 this year.

"It is an honour because there were so many great teacher candidates with knowledge and ability in the undertaking," said Roszita, who teaches English at SMK Tengku Ampuan Intan, Kuala Berang in Terengganu.

She brushed up on issues pertaining to the Arctic such as climate change, biological diversity, natural resources, territorial disputes and the people after submitting her application form.

"As I am not a science teacher, I felt my knowledge on the Arctic is inadequate and read up on it. The more I read, the more fascinated I am with the region. I hope what I have read up on will prepare me for the expedition.

"I also work out more to ensure I am physically fit to participate in the activities which include hiking and long walks. I want to be mentally and physically strong to take an active part in the expedition," she said.

"I am looking forward to experience nature at the Arctic and work with researchers, biologists, educators and students from around the world. I can hardly wait to spend my time on board the vessel and also go onshore to conduct blubber insulation experiments, explore historic whaling graves and learn about glaciology and the arts and culture of the people.

"Awe-inspiring scenery — including towering icebergs — is waiting at every turn and I hope to see polar bears and the northern lights," she added.

The selected candidates attended a briefing at a polar camp recently. "Since Malaysians are accustomed to hot weather, we may have difficulties adapting to the cold climate. Fortunately, average temperatures range between -10°C to +10°C at the end of July.

"We were given an orientation package and advice on clothing. I hope I will not be seasick as we will spend most of our time onboard the vessel."

Rakesh Sala, who teaches biology at Maktab Rendah Sains Mara (MRSM) Gemencheh, Negri Sembilan was overjoyed when he was chosen to take part in the expedition as "it's a dream come true".

"I told my wife three years ago that one day I would go to the North Pole. She asked why? I answered: 'Not everybody wants to go to the Arctic.'

"I have mixed feelings — I am excited and worried at the same time. It's a responsibility as I will be representing MRSM, Mara, YPASM and, of course, Malaysia."

Rakesh has been keeping himself

**POLAR SCIENCE:** Two Malaysian teachers and four students join the Students On Ice expedition to develop a deeper understanding and respect for the planet



Participants will be on board MS Ocean Endeavour during the Students On Ice expedition.

fit and healthy by going for runs and working out. In addition to physical preparation, he also read up on the Arctic culture and topography, and learnt more about the trip from previous expeditions.

In terms of promoting science, especially through expeditions such as SOI, he said it will not only expose students to the subject but also raise their awareness of the dangers of global warming.

"I look forward to new experiences such as on site activities, exchanging views with participants and expanding my network of friends," he said.

Four 16-year-old students will also take part in the expedition. There are Ahmad Amirul Farhan Zulkifli (from SMK Agama Sheikh Abdul Malek, Kuala Terengganu), Nurul Izzaidah Zulkifli (SMK Tengku Ampuan Intan, Besut), Ashraf Hakimi Nurulfaizin (MRSM Kuala Kubu Baru) and Raslan Abdul Rahman (MRSM Alor Gajah).

YPASM chief executive officer Mohd Nasaruddin Abd Rahman said this expedition is the first for the country through an understanding with SOI Foundation based in Canada. YPASM was given the mandate to select students and teachers from Malaysia to participate in SOI.

A programme offering unique expeditions to the Arctic and Antarctic, SOI aims to provide youth from around the world with inspiring learning opportunities in the polar regions so that they can

develop a deeper understanding and respect for the planet and become inspired to make a difference in their communities and around the world.

"It is a ship-based expedition that brings together youth from around the world with scientists, educators, musicians, authors and innovators to explore the wonders of the Arctic and develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the important role the region plays in the global ecosystem.

"Students will engage in multi-disciplinary workshops, hands-on research and exploration on the Arctic environment including wildlife encounters, make visits to remote Arctic communities and acquire first-hand knowledge of and insight into the dynamics of climate change, traditional knowledge, policy and other important Arctic and global topics," he added.

The 15-day journey begins in Ottawa for three days of orientation activities before the participants fly to Kangerlussuaq, Greenland to board the expedition vessel. The team will spend 11 days onboard the vessel exploring the communities, coasts, bays and islands of western Greenland before crossing Davis Straits to Canada's High Arctic.

They will explore the eastern entrance of the Northwest passage including visits to Pond Inlet, Sir-milk National Park and Beechey Island. This expedition will end in Resolute Bay where they will board



Mohd Nasaruddin Abd Rahman



Rakesh Sala



Roszita Mat Zin

the programme.

Roszita added: "I hope Malaysians, especially students, will be more exposed to the Antarctica and Arctic. The selected students for this expedition are called Young Researchers and they will be involved in some of the research and, upon our return from the expedition, we hope to expand the knowledge that we have gained and share the experiences with others.

"Hopefully, through the sharing of knowledge, more students will be interested to learn about environment issues such as the thinning of ice and biodiversity of the Arctic region.

"I plan to write about my experience to share this once-in-a-lifetime experience with others. As I believe words accompanied by pictures can be really effective in conveying our message, I will try to get the best photos to capture the moments during the expedition."

For Rakesh, he will make a report to Mara and present his findings upon his return. "I will give a talk on my experience to MRSM students and schools with cooperation from YPASM. I will also ask for a grant to publish a book documenting our Arctic expedition," he said, adding that the possible title will be *From Moncheh to Kangerlussuaq*.

the charter flight back to Ottawa.

This expedition consists of 110 students and 75 staff from Canada, the United States, Greenland, Monaco, China, Malaysia, Norway, Rwanda, Italy, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

Every district in Malaysia nominates two students. The selection process via a polar science camp was held on March 15 and 16 in Kuala Terengganu. Interested students were tested on their knowledge of the Arctic. Their skills — communication, writing, speaking, leadership and creative — were also examined. "We also held physical tests to see if they're fit for the programme."

In addition to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, the Terengganu State government and Mara also supported