

KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN
TARIKH: 2 OGOS 2017 (RABU)

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COLLABORATIONS

Stepping up on science tie-ups

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MALAYSIA and the United Kingdom are set to step up collaborations in the areas of science, technology and innovation with the extension of the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund.

Started in 2014, the fund has thus far enabled local researchers to collaborate with research partners in the UK on projects that address specific issues on climate change and sustainability. Announced last week, the extension will see a 50 per cent increase in committed resources and funding from both countries from 2019 to 2021 to promote larger-scale research calls, innovation-focused activities and capacity building activities that support the development agendas of Malaysia.



Zakri Abdul
Hamid

"Malaysia is one of the most active of the 18 Newton Fund countries, with one of the highest averages in respect of the quality of their applications. Currently, 18 British and Malaysian funding organisations work together to offer funding opportunities for researchers. A total of 28 activities have been established and about 100 funding grants awarded since the fund's inception in 2014," said Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid, Malaysia's Science Advisor to the Prime Minister.

British High Commissioner to Malaysia

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NANCY SHUKRI
Minister in the Prime
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Vicki Treadell said the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund demonstrates the commitment by both countries towards sustainable development, promoting cross-cutting technology and innovative solutions, and building capacity in science and research. "It is a key pillar of our bilateral partnership," she added.

Both Zakri and Treadell were speaking at the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund Open Day which was graced by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, who is also the Minister in charge of the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT), Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri.

In her speech, she said: "Science and technology are the enablers or catalysts for many of our economic development. The Malaysian government is giving emphasis in science and technology to ensure the sustainable development of the country. International collaboration programmes and activities including the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund is a good model to spur strategic partnership in finding solutions of the global issues."

The Newton-Ungku Omar Fund has been progressing rapidly. A cohesive range of research and innovation activities have kicked off that include collaborations on health research involving the UK Medical Research Council and the Academy of Sciences Malaysia; continued work on capacity building by British Council and the UK Academies; and a large scale Research and Innovation Bridges programme on sustainable urbanisation, led by InnovateUK, Research Councils UK and MIGHT.



New programmes rolling out this year include collaborations to improve understanding of the impacts of hydrometeorological hazards led by MIGHT and Natural Environment Research Council UK; and programmes for delivering transferable skills in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), focussing on transformative and high-quality collaborative projects to raise skill levels in Malaysia involving Science and Technology Facilities Council UK and MoHE.

The Newton-Ungku Omar Fund Open Day brought Malaysia's science, technology and innovation community together to celebrate the success of the fund thus far. The event saw the launch of the Weather and Climate

SAMBUNGAN...
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Nancy Shukri (seventh from right) with the recipients of the research grants to 12 winning collaborative projects under the Newton-Ungku Omar Fund. To her right are Vicky Treadell, Asma Ismail and Zakri Abdul Hamid.
 PICTURE BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

Science for Service Partnership (WCSSP) — a landmark collaboration between the UK Met Office and National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) Malaysia, Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia), National Hydraulic Research Institute of Malaysia (NAHRIM), and Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID) Malaysia. This project aims to harness Malaysian and British scientific expertise to improve forecasts for severe weather in Malaysia and the region, to save lives and protect livelihoods.

At the event, President of Academy of Sciences of Malaysia (ASM), Professor Datuk Dr Asma Ismail also presented

about £4.6 million (RM25.77 million) worth of research grants to twelve winning collaborative projects under the "Bilateral medical and health research in non-communicable diseases (NCDs)" programme. Funded by ASM and Medical Research Council UK, the two-year programme sees Malaysian and British medical researchers working together on research to tackle NCDs prevalent in Malaysia.

Academic researchers, small-medium enterprises, current fund recipients amongst others attended the Open Day and participated in a series of talks, workshops and showcases by the

fund's Malaysian delivery partners and successful awardees.

Some of the activities included science communication skills training by British Council Malaysia and ASM, a talk on "How to write a good international collaboration proposal", a talk and coaching session on intellectual property management by Malaysian Intellectual Property Office (MyIPO), UK Intellectual Property Office, and PlaTCOM Ventures Sdn Bhd, and briefing sessions for new funding opportunities.

The Open Day was co-organised by MIGHT and the British High Commission Kuala Lumpur.

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE STAR (NATION) : MUKA SURAT 10
TARIKH: 2 OGOS 2017 (RABU)

Govt plans to train advanced NDT experts

KUANTAN: Non-destructive testing (NDT) is an important field in engineering and science that can save time and money in product testing and research, but Malaysia has fewer than 20 experts in advanced methods in the field.

However, Malaysian Nuclear Agency senior director of commercialisation & technology planning programmes Datuk Dr Zulkifli Mohamed Hashim hopes the agency will be able to start a training programme in advanced NDT techniques within three to five years.

"NDT can test materials for defects, leaks or corrosion without ruining the sample or having to shut (a system) down," he said, adding that shutting a critical system down for even

one day could cost a company millions.

He said the Skills Development Department (JPK) is developing a national occupational skill standard (NOSS) for an advanced NDT programme.

"Once that is done, we will see if we have the trainers, experts, equipment and facilities to meet NOSS requirements and start our programme," he said.

The continuing advancement of NDT will contribute to economic prosperity, increased competitiveness and the nation's advancement, Dr Zulkifli said.

"The Malaysian Nuclear Agency is always ready to provide facilities and discussions for NDT techniques, whether conventional or advanced."

KERATAN AKHBAR
THE STAR (NATION) : MUKA SURAT 2
TARIKH : 2 OGOS 2017 (RABU)

TheStar
SAYS

GLCs must operate with accountability and integrity

THE National Audit Department was restructured last September as part of its transformation plan. One of the main changes was to deepen its audit of government companies.

As a result, the latest of the Auditor-General's Report series has a separate volume on the management of government-linked companies (GLCs).

This is a noteworthy development because as Auditor-General Tan Sri Dr Madinah Mohamad pointed out in the report's preface, the governance of GLCs has been a hot topic in recent years, particularly in relation to accountability, transparency and integrity.

"The failure of good governance would expose an entity to risks of abuse of power, embezzlement and

corruption," she wrote.

The Audit Act 1957 empowers the Auditor-General to audit a company in which the Federal Government, a state government or a public authority holds more than half of the paid-up capital.

Tabled in Parliament on Monday, the Auditor-General's Report 2016 Series 1 contains audit findings on the management of seven GLCs: Tekun Nasional, CyberSecurity Malaysia, Syarikat Pemasaran Karyaneka Sdn Bhd, Ketengah Holding Sdn Bhd, Ketengah Properties Sdn Bhd, Prisma Harta Sdn Bhd and UMK Business Ventures Sdn Bhd.

An agency under the Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Ministry, Tekun provides existing and new

entrepreneurs with loans to develop and expand their businesses.

CyberSecurity Malaysia describes itself as the national cybersecurity specialist agency under the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry.

Wholly owned by Malaysia Handicraft Development Corporation, Karyaneka was set up to market and promote Malaysian craft products.

Ketengah Holding is the investment holding arm of the Central Terengganu Development Authority (better known as Ketengah, its Bahasa Malaysia acronym), while Ketengah Properties handles the property business of Ketengah Holding.

Prisma Harta is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Iskandar Region Development Authority that manages a housing scheme in Bandar Nusajaya, Johor.

UMK Business Ventures is Universiti Malaysia Kelantan's business wing. Its main activity is the rental of student residences in Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan, to the university.

As can be expected from this mixed bag of GLCs, the overall report card – based on financial performance and corporate governance practices – is a medley of decent grades, underwhelming scores and worrying Fs.

When auditing each of these companies, the National Audit Department detected weaknesses

and recommended immediate remedies.

The department said some of the companies responded swiftly after the weaknesses were highlighted.

Nevertheless, it added, corrective action should be continuous and every company should have a system of checks and balances to ensure a holistic evaluation.

This is an important point for all GLCs. The Auditor-General's Report is not just about identifying flaws in the organisations that have been audited.

A GLC does not have to wait to be audited before deciding to do the right thing, which is to operate with accountability and integrity, and to ensure that its activities generate maximum value for money.



Audit report: CyberSecurity Malaysia used RM3.7m development grants for entertainment

KUALA LUMPUR, July 31 — **CyberSecurity Malaysia (CSM)** spent RM3.76 million in development grants meant for projects under the 10th and 11th Malaysia Plan to cover operational expenditures such as claims for entertainment activities and workshops, according to the latest Auditor-General's report released today.

CSM, which is under the purview of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti) receives grants from the ministry and other government agencies for its expenses, as it is a "nonprofit-oriented company".

It received operating grants of RM72.21 million and development grants of RM295.24 million from 2013 to 2016.

"... development grants for projects under the 10th MP and 11th MP totaling RM3.76 million were used for operating expenditure, such as entertainment expenditure claims, secretary week workshops and others.

"The usage of development grants for operating expenditure is not allowed except allocation for operating expenditure under the Shared Service Fee (SSF)," the A-G report said.

It added that expenses for three out of ten of CSM's projects under the 10th Malaysia Plan (MP) exceeded the total allocation of RM727,402.

The audit report carried out from May to October 2016 stated that the overall financial performance of CSM from 2013 to 2015 was satisfactory, and its cash flow showed improvement for the three consecutive years.

But it advised CSM to be "more proactive" in generating revenue from the company's activities instead of just depending on grants from the federal government.



Sultan Johor Rasmi Abu Bakar Maritime Base Batuan Tengah

Tarikh kemaskini: 01/08/2017

KOTA TINGGI, 1 Ogos (Bernama) -- Sultan Johor Sultan Ibrahim Almarhum Sultan Iskandar hari ini berkenan merasmikan Pos Maritim Malaysia Batuan Tengah, di sini, dan menamakan pos berkenaan secara rasmi sebagai 'Abu Bakar Maritime Base'.

Hadir sama pada majlis itu, Ketua Pengarah Maritim Malaysia Laksamana Maritim Datuk Zulkifili Abu Bakar, Ketua Pengarah Majlis Keselamatan Negara Jen (B) Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin dan Ketua Polis Negara Tan Sri Khalid Abu Bakar.

Berucap pada majlis berkenaan, Zulkifili berkata pangkalan itu mula dibina pada 16 April 2012 menerusi Rancangan Malaysia ke-10 dan siap sepenuhnya pada 29 Ogos tahun lepas dengan kos RM61.5 juta.

Beliau berkata pangkalan tersebut merupakan projek Majlis Keselamatan Negara (MKN) bagi menzahirkan kedaulatan negara ke atas Batuan Tengah, menjaga kepentingan keselamatan kawasan perairan di sekitarnya, mengawal keselamatan perairan negara, melaksanakan kajian saintifik marin serta menjaga kepentingan kawasan perikanan untuk golongan nelayan tradisional pantai timur Johor.

"MKN bersama Jabatan Kerja Raya telah menyerahkan pangkalan ini kepada Maritim Malaysia pada 8 Nov lepas. Pangkalan ini beroperasi 24 jam sepenuhnya dengan dikendalikan tiga pegawai dan 14 anggota penguat kuasa Maritim Malaysia diketuai Lt Komander Maritim Muhammad Padzly Pasrial.

"Pembinaan struktur bangunan dan kesemua kemudahan pula telah dilaksanakan oleh Jabatan Kerja Raya Malaysia. Maritim Malaysia merupakan pengguna utama bagi pangkalan ini dan ia diguna bersama oleh Jabatan Laut, Jabatan Perikanan, **Jabatan Meteorologi**, Jabatan Alam Sekitar, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Angkatan Tentera Malaysia, Polis Diraja Malaysia serta terdapat kemudahan wakaf dan jeti bagi kegunaan nelayan tempatan," katanya.

Menurut Zulkifili, Abu Bakar Maritime Base menyediakan beberapa kemudahan kepada pengoperasiannya termasuk membolehkan Maritim Malaysia merancang, merangka dan melaksanakan operasi, logistik dan pentadbiran.

Beliau berkata Abu Bakar Maritime Base turut memudahkan operasi khas sama ada bersama agensi-agensi lain atau secara bersendirian dengan lebih efisien bagi memastikan keselamatan dan keamanan perairan zon Maritim Malaysia terpelihara dan

mencegah pencerobohan aset asing serta mengambil tindakan ke atas pelanggaran undang-undang negara dengan pantas dengan kesiapsiagaan yang tinggi.

Abu Bakar Maritime Base turut dilengkapi dengan sistem peralatan terkini seperti sistem pengawasan jarak jauh, sistem sisa pepejal dan sistem stesen iklim, katanya.

Abu Bakar Maritime Base didirikan di atas Batuan Tengah yang terdiri daripada dua struktur batuan dengan jarak 316.6 meter di antara satu sama lain dan terletak di bahagian timur permulaan Selat Singapura dan barat Laut China Selatan.

Batuan Tengah yang terletak di tengah-tengah laluan maritim yang sibuk, berkedudukan kira-kira 7.9 batu nautika dari pesisir pantai Johor dan 0.6 batu nautika dari Pulau Batu Puteh.

Pada Mei 2008, Mahkamah Keadilan Antarabangsa (ICJ) di The Hague, Belanda memutuskan bahawa Batuan Tengah adalah milik Malaysia, manakala Pulau Batu Puteh diberikan kepada Singapura. Hak milik Tubir Selatan (South Ledge) di sekitar kawasan itu pula ditentukan di perairan mana ia berada.

-- BERNAMA

It's getting real hot in Malaysia

The heat is stifling but still nothing like in Europe and the US, say experts

PETALING JAYA: "Hot" is the word on everyone's mind right now, with heatwaves sweeping across Europe and parts of the United States.

Temperatures in Britain were expected to climb as high as 32°C in the coming week while the mercury in parts of Italy had soared well above 40°C, news reports said yesterday.

Although Malaysia is not directly affected by the heatwave in the northern hemisphere of the globe, it was not spared the effects of the annual south-west monsoon dry spell, said MetMalaysia (the Meteorological Department of Malaysia).

"However, the hot weather here now is not as bad as the El-Nino of 2014 and 2015," MetMalaysia director-general Alui Bahari said yesterday.

The south-west monsoon began on May 17 and is expected to last until September.

Alui said the highest temperature recorded so far this year was not even during this dry period.

"It was 36.9°C in Chuping, Perlis, on March 18. The highest recorded temperature in Malaysian history is 40.1°C, also in the same area," he said.

Climatology and Oceanography specialist from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Prof Dr Fredolin Tangang explained that the heatwave in Europe and the



Cooling off:
Children playing in the Waterfall Playpool at the KLCC Park in Kuala Lumpur.

United States was "normal" for this time of year.

"However, the weather system in Malaysia is different from that in America and Europe. Our dry spell is connected to the monsoon season," he said.

Also, while Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak are expected to have less rain than usual during this period, Sabah is expected to see

more rainfall.

Dr Tangang also warned of a possible increase in the risk of forest fires. "We have had reports of fires in Sumatra.

"This is a rather typical dry and hot season although this year, the south-west monsoon season is wetter than the last one," he added.

It was reported earlier that there were 170 hotspots across Indonesia

in mid-July, mostly in Aceh, East Nusa Tenggara and West Kalimantan.

According to the latest map of MetMalaysia's "Fire Danger Rating System" under the "Fine Fuel Moisture Code" - southern Sumatra, West Kalimantan and large parts of Sabah and Sarawak were in red.

Red represents "extreme" - the

highest in the scale - which indicates ease of flammability of grasslands and bushes.

But Alui said the rainfall in August was expected to exceed that of July, helping to dampen the risk of fires.

"The situation is not worrying. Even so, there should be enforcement to prevent open burning," he said.