

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK (1993-1998)

# MAILING A BRAVE NEW DAWN



By  
GHAZALLY ISMAIL  
&  
ZAWAWI ISMAIL

Photographs by  
ZULKALNAIN ZAINAL ABIDIN





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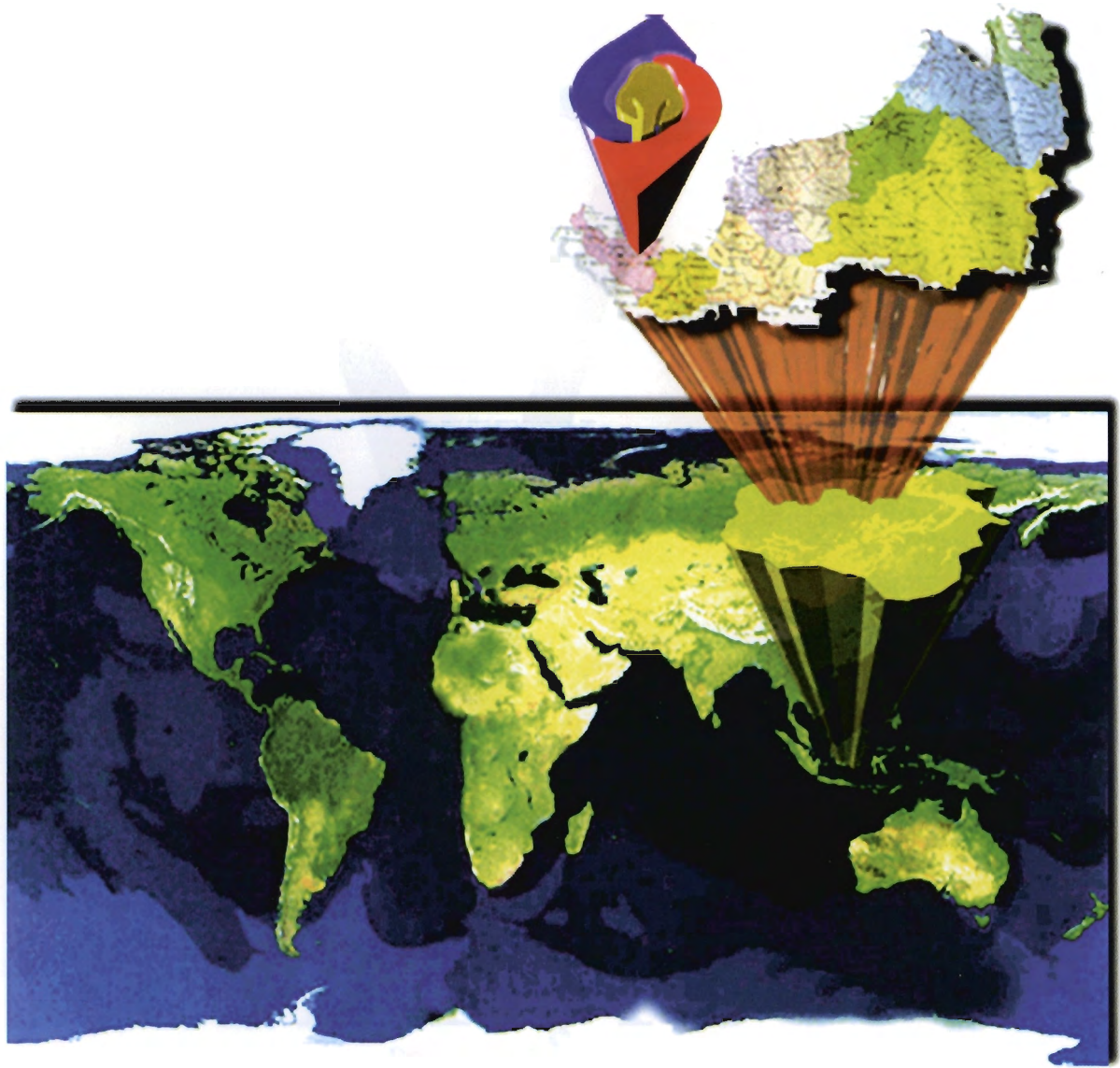
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*Ulangtahun KeLima*  
**UNIMAS**





**IN THE BEGINNING**



**ESTABLISHING SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES**

**RETHINKING THE MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**



**OPTIMIZING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**A TRAIL BLAZER IN MALAYSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION**



**THE VISION OF A LEARNING SOCIETY**

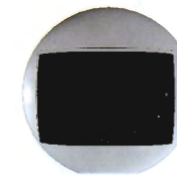
**RESEARCH CULTURE COMES OF AGE AT UNIMAS**



**BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND UNIVERSITY**



**ACHIEVING A GRADUATE PROFILE FOR A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT**



**QUALITY : A RACE WITHOUT A FINISHING LINE**

**INTERNATIONALIZING UNIMAS**

**HUMANIZING HIGHER EDUCATION**



**INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM**



#### THE RATIONALE OF THE LOGO

The overall theme reflects the University's commitment to knowledge and excellence. The tree, a symbol of growth and knowledge, stands also for the natural resources of Sarawak and Malaysia, their diverse ethnic groups and cultures. The clasped hands symbolise unity in diversity, a concern for the environment and society, as well as the exploitation and optimisation of new and useful knowledge in development. Together, the hands and the tree form the letter S for Sarawak. The colours blue and red symbolise the integration of education and technology, while golden yellow reflects quality and excellence in both human resource development and services.







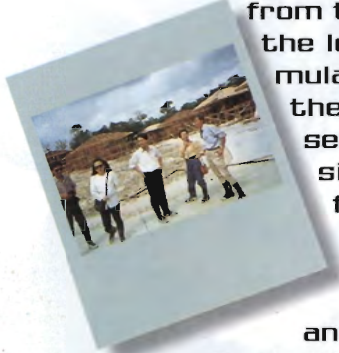
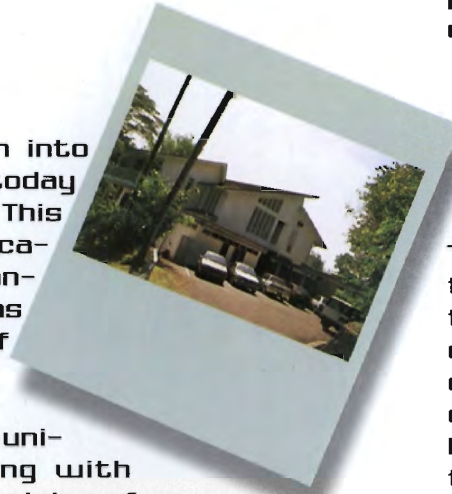




## IN THE BEGINNING

### The Birth of UNIMAS

**T**he seed that was to blossom into the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak of today was effectively sown on October 1992. This was when the then Minister of Education, Datuk Amar Dr Sulaiman Daud announced that Dato' Dr Zawawi Ismail was the first Vice-Chancellor designate of UNIMAS. An office facility was secured first at Bandar Damansara town centre Kuala Lumpur. Here the fledgling university started its humble beginning with about a half-dozen strong staff, comprising of assorted administrative and academic staff from various organizations and diverse backgrounds. Soon after, an old bungalow, Rumah Setia, at Jalan Reservoir Kuching served as the UNIMAS administrative office. A skeletal but essential number of support staff from Sarawak joined to complement our effort in spearheading UNIMAS growth in the state of Sarawak. Together we strode with great confidence to make the presence of UNIMAS felt among the expectant local public. It was also from this premise that strong rapport was forged with the local leaders of the state and the community. Formulation of the mission statement and objectives for the university started almost immediately, through a series of workshops, seminars and brainstorming sessions. Friends of UNIMAS from other universities and from industry came forward to share their ideas and experiences with us. They voluntarily served on our many steering committees, including the Academic Committee, Academic Plan Analyst Panel and Academic programme Sub-Committees. Henceforth, the Tree Book, as our Academic Plan is now finally referred to by everyone at UNIMAS, was published.



After the stage was set, further planning steps were taken which included recruitment and training of core faculty, planning the curriculum, establishment of the physical facilities.

Our temporary campus was hurriedly constructed at Kota Samarahan to meet the target date for the first student intake in July 1993. Only a mere four months after construction began, the first pioneering students and staff of UNIMAS moved into their new campus at Kota Samarahan.

The appointment of deans and directors of various faculties and institutes became the cornerstone and main feature of this phase of planning. Strategic thinking and concrete positioning of this new baby immediately became the obsession of the energetic and emboldened academic leaders of UNIMAS, who had been then specially hand-picked by the top UNIMAS administration. Pioneers as they were, they enthusiastically assumed full responsibility to set the direction and steer the UNIMAS boat through the uncharted waters of future growth.

In conjunction with the nation's Independence Day Celebration on the 31st August 1994 in Kuching, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad officially performed the UNIMAS grand ground breaking ceremony at Kota Samarahan.

This was also followed by the auspicious launching of the UNIMAS logo, that marked the propitious beginning of a new institution of higher learning for the Malaysian society at large. It symbolized UNIMAS's benevolence and commitment to knowledge and excellence. A 'tree of knowledge' centrally depicted in this brightly coloured emblem signified the promise of rapid growth in knowledge and its applications. The image of 'clasping hands' surrounding the 'tree' reflected its concern, responsibility and caring attitude for the environment and society.











The official opening of UNIMAS by YAB Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad















## UNIMAS Chancellor



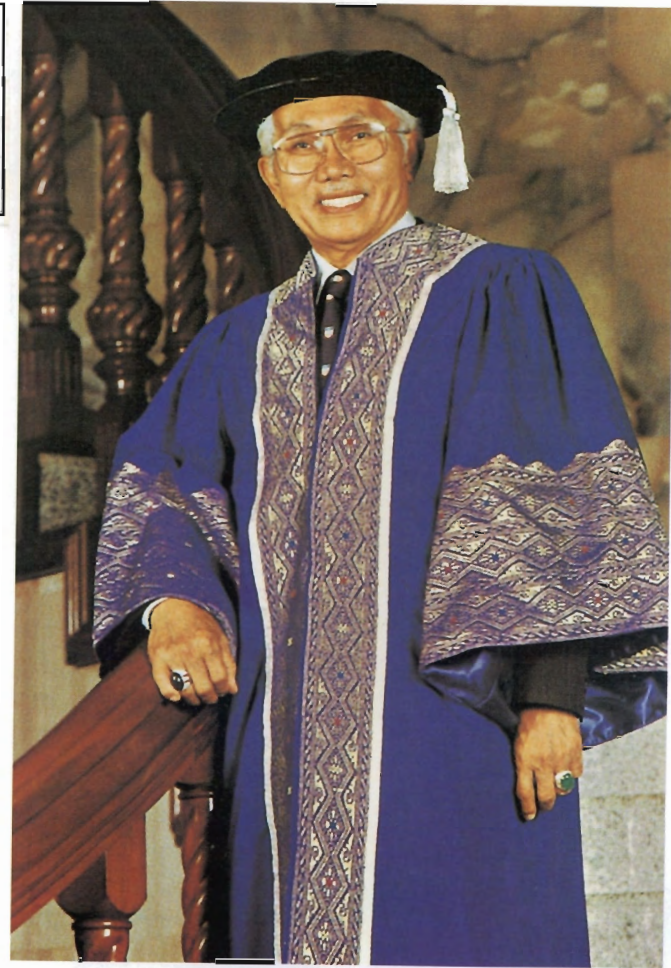
**Tuan Yang Terutama  
Tun Datuk Patinggi (Dr.)  
Ahmad Zaidi Adruce Bin Muhammed Noor**

"Sarawak is naturally proud and honoured to play host to a national university in the State. I sincerely hope the university will take full advantage of its location in Sarawak- a land rich in both its biological and cultural diversity"



## UNIMAS Pro-Chancellor

*W*hilst academic pursuit, is an important corporate objective of UNIMAS, it will also function meaningfully in tandem with the contemporary needs of the state and nation- making it thus an important partner for progress in Sarawak"



**Yang Amat Berhormat  
Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr.)  
Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud**



## UNIMAS Council Chairman



*U*NIMAS will strive to carve out a name as a service-oriented institution of higher learning which serves the needs of a future industrialised society by, among other things, producing employable graduates"

**Yang Berbahagia  
Datuk Amar Tan Sri Haji Bujang Bin Mohd. Nor**



## UNIMAS Vice-Chancellor

"UNIMAS has a vision to exert and affect change in higher education. Being new UNIMAS does not have any burden of the past and is free to move forward, to build a university that is responsive to the issues of today and the needs of tomorrow. UNIMAS will be pro-active, forward-looking and a very contemporary university with a sharp competitive edge over the existing universities in the country"



Professor Dato' Zawawi Ismail






## RETHINKING THE MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**A**s institutions around the world struggle to adapt to the information age, the reform of higher education has become an international phenomenon. UNIMAS was born amidst this fundamental debate over the purposes and public responsibilities of higher education. Favourable conditions that can guarantee the continued survival of the traditional form of universities no longer prevail. Budget reductions, demographic shifts, changes in the job market, and rising student vocational interest have forced universities to rethink their mission.

Contemporary demands for higher education reform in Malaysian universities have been building in intensity for over a decade. Typically, economic and demographic factors have been at work but change has been pervasive and fundamental. It

tends to occur reactively through an unpredictable blend of serendipity and deliberation. Today change is experienced at such an unprecedented rate that universities failing to embrace change will certainly be left behind. A sense of seriousness and urgency must prevail in order to respond and to be guided by this change. Good strategic planning is required to create opportunities from change. The next millennium poses new challenges and opportunities in the provision of higher education. Challenges must not only be identified quickly, but also be met effectively.



UNIMAS considers that time is now ripe to challenge much of the conventional wisdom of higher education. After more than a century of compulsory, formal and institutional education, many countries today are beginning to worry about its effectiveness. Is the education system misconceived? Today undergraduate programmes in universities throughout the world are confused tangles of unrelated problems that cut across all of academia. The issue of student consumerism, for instance, has been cited as the major reason why universities today are placing more emphases upon profit making in their daily activities. Many are saddened by the growing trend that concern for maximizing profit far outweighs concerns and emphases upon providing meaningful general education for graduates. Additionally, there is also the issue of over-specialization of disciplines, where courses aimed at career preparation far outnumber those emphasizing intellectual development. As a result, our graduates are not equipped to become fully contributing members of a rapidly changing society.









## Seeking and providing higher education with societal relevance

UNIMAS believes that specific changes must take place now if we are truly serious in educating our youth so that they can face the challenges of the next millennium, with full confidence and vigour. While the goal of university educational process includes vocational instruction and training, we must not let this obscure some of the more fundamental and important mission of a university education; that of preparing our youth for citizenship and for participating in a just and responsible society. Higher education today must be seen as a coherent sequence of studies to promote citizenship. In other words, our educational programmes and courses must also be aimed at inculcating a sense of civic and community responsibility and participation. More succinctly stated, these courses must not always and solely be dictated by the parochial and self-serving demands of work and career development.

