

# UMP FORGES COOPERATION WITH HSKA AND MERCEDES BENZ IN AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING

KUALA LUMPUR, MARCH 8 - Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) marked another milestone in its effort to develop commendable and reliable workforce for the nation when it signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with strategic and prestigious German partner, Hochschule Karlsruhe, University of Applied Sciences (HsKA) that paved the way for undergraduates to undergo a dual automotive engineering degree programme which will commence this year.

In 2010, UMP and HsKA started working together when both universities made a pact and offered the first Dual Award Programme in mechatronic engineering.

Those who graduated from the programme would be awarded two degrees which were recognized by professional engineering bodies – Engineering Accreditation Council (EAC) in Malaysia, Germany's Accreditation Council (a foundation for the accreditation of study programmes in Germany), ASSIN e.V. (the German Accreditation Agency Specialised in Accrediting Degree Programmes in Engineering, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Mathematics) and European Accreditation of Engineering Programme.

At the same event, UMP also signed a letter of intent (LoI) with Mercedes-Benz Malaysia Sdn Bhd that would see both parties cooperating in academic and research works as well as providing opportunities for undergraduates to undergo industrial internship in the automotive company.

The two momentous events were witnessed by The Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr Gunter Gruber and President of the Malaysian Automotive Association, Datuk Aishah Shaikh Ahmad.

Other guests present were UMP's Vice Chancellor Professor Dato' Dr Daing

Nasir Ibrahim and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Dr Badhrulhisham Abdul Aziz.

HsKA was presented by its Rector Professor Dr Karl-Heinz Meisel and Vice President Professor Dr Dieter Hopfel while Mercedes-Benz by its Vice-President (Finance Controlling & Administration), Micheal Cremer.

In his speech, Dato' Dr Daing Nasir said the MoU was one of the internationalisation activities, an important agenda included in UMP's Strategic Plan for 2011-2015.

Besides contributing to the expansion of UMP's global networking, this collaboration adds a significant value to the



four University Key Result Areas (UKRA) within the framework of the Strategic Plan of UMP 2011-2015 namely Enhancing Academic Quality, Financial Sustainability, Socio-economic Development and Branding for Strategic Positioning.

"UMP is strategically located in Pekan which is the hub for automotive industry. Among the major companies operating in the area are DRB-Hicom, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen and Toyota.

"This makes the cooperation in the Dual Award Automotive Programme such an apt move as it is capable of meeting requirements of the market which keeps on progressing to the next level.

"The automotive industry in Malaysia is still in need of highly-skilled workers in line with the sector's demands and UMP will be the one that produces competent graduates who fit the industries' requirements," Professor Dato' Dr Daing Nasir Ibrahim said at the signing ceremony held at Maya Hotel here.

He added that the internationalisation process of an institute of higher learning was essential in charting its course to being a

world-class university.

"The Dual Award Programme offered by UMP is based on the same module used by HsKA. Equivalent to foreign students studying in Germany the undergraduates at UMP will also have the opportunity to learn German language. They will make use of the acquired language during the main courses where on third of the modules are taught by HsKA professors," he said.

On the industrial internship, Professor Dato' Dr Daing Nasir highlighted undergraduates would undergo a six-month training where they would get to experience world-class quality standards of the various German companies in Malaysia. Furthermore,

the extended practical training for a full semester foster industry exposure of becoming engineers and leaves ample time to assign a full project to the interns, which ideally translates into the bachelor thesis.

"The cooperation will

further enhance UMP's standing in offering excellent education and in becoming an education hub in this region," he added.

He also said the cooperation forged with Mercedes-Benz would involve UMP staff and undergraduates, consultation in academic and research programmes as well as in developing human capital.

This would help churn out graduates who were more competent and competitive in many aspects, he added.

Daing Nasir also said UMP would be able to share experience and knowledge in a variety of expertise that would benefit everyone.

"This can be seen as added values for UMP and an advantage to attract potential students to pursue their studies in the university," he said.

Also present were HsKA automotive coordinator Prof Dr Maurice Andre Ketter, HsKA mechatronic coordinator Prof Dr Robert Weiss, Higher Education Ministry Industrial Relations Division Director Professor Dr Shamsudin Baharin and German Academic, Career and Culture Centre (GACC) Director, Brian Trenaman.