

# Natural Products R&D at UMP

Returning to Malaysia from a lengthy stint of study and work in the United States, Mashitah Mohd. Yusoff would never have imagined stepping into a burgeoning natural products R&D world.

Eleven years on and attached to the Faculty of Industrial Sciences and Technology, she is coordinating the design of state-of-the-art teaching and research laboratories to complement already established Engineering facilities at the University.

"We have assembled an amazing team of Malaysian and international researchers within a very short time. Our complementary areas will allow us to do even more for product manufacturing, validation and testing."

"Malaysians are very serious about natural

products business and want to do well locally and in the global market. Products which meet industrial standards command higher value in both internal and external markets. Good R&D also boosts market value," she said

A chemist by training, Mashitah had worked in a quality laboratory environment and is realistic about attaining GMP and the ISO/IEC 17025 certifications for UMP. She would like to emphasis awareness and training concurrent to construction of a compliant facility and acquisition of analytical instruments. The availability of such a facility will be a plus for academia and industries in the ECER.

She added, "It is no longer a question of understanding and appreciation among SME's and the industry. It is now a matter of gaining access."

## FACTOID



*Labisia pumila* or "kacip fatimah" is a Malay medicinal herb found in Bentong district (Photo courtesy of Fazliana Mansor, Ph.D student advisee to Mashitah Mohd. Yusoff)