

USIM NEWSLETTER

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USIM Focuses on Developing Shariah Artificial Intelligence for the Benefit of the Ummah

Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) aspires to lead the initiative in developing Shariah-related Artificial Intelligence (AI), which has the potential to assist in solving issues faced by the Muslim community. Fundamental issues frequently discussed among Muslims in Malaysia and globally include inheritance distribution (faraidh), prayer, fasting, Hajj, and halal matters.

USIM believes that AI technology can help achieve the university's mission of safeguarding the welfare of the ummah. Therefore, USIM is open to collaborating with industry players and government agencies interested in working together to develop Shariah AI as a form of continuous social responsibility for the ummah.

Using AI, the digitalization of campuses envisioned by the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) can be implemented more efficiently, enhancing knowledge delivery, increasing educational effectiveness, reducing university operational costs, providing more flexible learning opportunities, and empowering research and future digital talent development.

According to an official Facebook post by KPT, several research universities have been assigned to lead specific AI fields, such as the University of Malaya (AI in medicine), Universiti Putra Malaysia (cybersecurity and cryptology), Universiti Sains Malaysia (semiconductors),

and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Malay language translation).

USIM's ambition to lead Shariah AI was expressed during the Higher Education AI Day 2025 (AI Day), a two-day event held on February 27 and 28 in Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor. The event was officiated by the Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Datuk Ts. Mustapha Sakmud, who emphasized the government's commitment to producing 200,000 AI experts by 2030 through MY AI NEXUS. He also highlighted AI's role in improving university operations and enhancing digital learning.

“AI technology can help achieve the university's mission of safeguarding the welfare of the ummah”

During the event, the book 'Digital Resilience – Navigating Transformation in a Dynamic Environment' was launched, featuring articles on information technology from eight universities, a

collaborative effort by the Higher Education Leadership Academy (AKEPT) and published by USIM.

Higher Education AI Day 2025 was a joint initiative by USIM, KPT, and the Council of IT Directors of Public Universities (MAPITA), alongside government and industry representatives, aimed at helping higher education institutions identify and adopt AI technologies within their agencies. This is crucial to ensuring that short- and long-term AI development plans within institutions result in globally competitive innovations.



USIM Supports Open Access Initiative for Public University Theses and Dissertations

USIM is committed to supporting the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) and Malaysian Public Universities in expanding open access to academic theses and dissertations. This initiative was officially launched at the Marriott Putrajaya Hotel on February 13, 2025.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was attended by representatives of the Vice-Chancellors and Rectors Committee of Public Universities, along with the Director General of Higher Education,

Prof. Dato' Dr. Azlinda Azman, and witnessed by the Minister of Higher Education, YB Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abd Kadir.

In his speech, YB Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry emphasized the importance of this initiative in strengthening the nation's research ecosystem.

"The implementation of open access to theses and dissertations is a strategic step to ensure

that the knowledge produced by our researchers can be widely utilized. It will also help enhance the competitiveness of Malaysia's higher education institutions at the global level," he said.

To realize this effort, the Public University Open Access Committee was established in 2019 under the Council of Public University Chief Librarians (MKPUA) to develop

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- YB Dato' Seri Diraja
Dr. Zambry Abd Kadir



Executive Hajj Guidance Program (EPIH) 2025

Strengthens Understanding of Hajj and Umrah

USIM has organized the Executive Hajj Guidance Program (EPIH) 2025, under the Faculty of Leadership and Management (FKP). The program, which took place from January 13 to February 24, 2025, aims to strengthen participants' understanding of Hajj and Umrah education and management.

EPIH 2025 focuses on quality sacrifices and lessons in the context of Hajj and Umrah. To enhance the competence of the guides, the program includes key topics such as Andragogy Teaching Methods in Hajj and Umrah, Hajj and Umrah Management for Special Needs Pilgrims (OKU), as well as the History of Haramain and the Virtues of Masya'ir. Experienced instructors like Dr. Nidzamuddin Zakaria and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Noornajihan Ja'afar enrich the sessions with in-depth knowledge on essential aspects of pilgrimage.

EPIH 2025 is conducted in a hybrid format, allowing participants to attend both in-person and online sessions. This approach not only facilitates access for more guides but also ensures they gain a better understanding of the practical aspects and legal rulings of Hajj and Umrah. Special sessions on Women's Fiqh in Hajj and Umrah, as well as the Contemporary Practices of Hajj and Umrah, are also offered, emphasizing the importance of understanding rights and responsibilities in performing the pilgrimage.

PU Hafiz, the winner of the first season of *Pencetus Ummah*, stated, "EPIH is very beneficial as it allows us to deepen our knowledge of Hajj and Umrah both practically and theoretically. With such programs, we can better assist

pilgrims in performing their pilgrimage more effectively and meaningfully."

Dr. Fatimah Syarha added that this program is crucial in training guides with the right knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

"Through the education provided in EPIH 2025, we can produce guides who not only understand theory but can also apply it practically in their guidance for Hajj and Umrah pilgrims," she said.

With comprehensive educational initiatives and experienced instructors, EPIH 2025 is expected to enhance the quality of guidance provided to pilgrims, making it more effective in helping them perform Hajj and Umrah. This program should serve as a model for other educational initiatives related to religious practices, ensuring that every pilgrim fulfills their obligations with a deep understanding and full awareness.

"Through the education provided in EPIH 2025, we can produce guides who not only understand theory but can also apply it practically in their guidance for Hajj and Umrah pilgrims"



**USIM
Strengthens
International
Networks**

Signs Five MoUs with
**Uzbekistan
Universities**

USIM continues to strengthen its academic network internationally by signing five Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with leading universities in Uzbekistan. The MoU exchange ceremony took place during the 1st Malaysia-Uzbekistan Higher Education Forum and Showcase, organized by the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) in collaboration with Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) on February 4, 2025.

USIM Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dato' Ts. Dr. Sharifudin Md. Shaarani, stated that this collaboration opens more opportunities in academics, research, and student and faculty exchanges.

"This MoU is a strategic step in strengthening cooperation between Malaysia and Uzbekistan, particularly in higher education. It also aligns with USIM's aspiration to become a global university based on the integration of Naqli and Aqli knowledge," he said.

The Uzbek institutions involved in the agreement with USIM include Tashkent University of Architecture and Civil Engineering (TUACE), Urgench State University (USU), Silk Road International Research Institute, Tashkent State University of Law (TSUL), and the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan (IIAU). The collaboration covers student and staff exchanges, joint research, academic development, as well as seminars and scholarly publications.

