

The Opening of 5th International Malaysian Social Science Conference (MSC5)



(Left - Right):
 Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rashila Ramli (Head, Operation Committee MSC5); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Laily Paim (Dean, Faculty of Human Ecology, UPM); YB Dato' Ong Tee Kiat, Deputy Minister of Higher Education; Prof. Dato' Dr. Abdul Rahman Embong (President PSSM, Chairman); Dr. Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah (Deputy Dean, Faculty of Human Ecology, UPM)

More than 200 participants and guests attended the grand opening of MSC5. It was an honour to the PSSM that the Minister of Higher Education (represented by his deputy) accepted the invitation of MSC5 Organising Committee to officiate the Conference and the book launch (report on page 20).

Presidential Address

The opening began with the Presidential Address by the President of the PSSM and the Chairman of the Organising Committee of MSC5, Prof. Dato' Dr. Abdul Rahman Embong. He took the opportunity to welcome all participants to the Conference, and to express heart-felt appreciation to the presence of YB Dato' Ong Tee Keat, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education (representing the Minister of Higher Education), and the support received from the Universiti Putra Malaysia in making the Conference a great success.

Great Achievements

In his presidential address, Prof. Rahman highlighted the achievements of the International Malaysia Studies Conference (MSC) started in 1997. After a decade of hard work, the biennial conference has emerged as one of the prominent scholarly events in this region. Its objectives are to bring together scholars from Malaysia and abroad

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Note From the Editor Special Focus on MSC5

It is our great pleasure to announce that the 5th International Malaysian Studies Conference (MSC5) being held on 8 – 10 August, 2006, at the Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), was a great success. We are glad that the Conference was well received, and the participants have found that the discussions at the Conference were very fruitful, productive and stimulating.

As highlighted by the President, Prof. Dr Abdul Rahman Embong, when wrapping up that the conference has recorded several achievements. The Editorial Board shares his views that the Conference has made new and bigger strides in many respects. First of all, it is the biggest in the series of MSCs thus far, featuring about 190 papers (50 more than presented at MSC4) and about 60 panels covering a rich variety of themes arranged in six parallel sessions. Since its inception in 1997, the primary objective of MSC has been to bring together scholars, both local and foreign, working on Malaysia, for the purpose of academic exchange and interaction. This objective has been achieved as MSC5 has attracted the biggest number of participants ever and a good mix of scholars and scholarship. In this conference, not only that we have the regular Malaysian social science scholars and Malaysianists, but also junior scholars and graduate students coming from both public and private universities and colleges. This suggests that MSC5 has established a successful brand name as the most prominent social science conference on Malaysia studies. More importantly, it shows that MSC is building the inclusive community of scholarship in Malaysia.

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Jawantankuasa Kerja PSSM / MSSM EXCO 2006/08

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About PSSM

Formed on 14 September 1978, Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia or the Malaysian Social Science Association (PSSM) aims to develop and promote social science education and research.

The Association's activities include organising forums, seminars and conferences; capacity building for young scholars, publishing books as well as disseminating and spreading information through our newsletter *Berita PSSM*. Besides continuing with the above activities, the Association hopes in the future to increase its research publication and so as to promote the development of the social sciences in the region.

PSSM welcomes new members from all groups - students, academicians, non-academicians, professionals, etc., both in Malaysia and abroad.

To join PSSM, please surf our homepage at <http://pssmalaysia.tripod.com> and fill in the membership form and send it to our Executive Secretary at pssmalaysia@yahoo.com

Membership Fee

Life Member	RM200
Ordinary Member	RM20
Student Member	RM5

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to deliberate on the various dimensions of Malaysian studies, draw inter-country comparison, strengthen networking and community building, and initiate various collaborative endeavours to advance Malaysian studies. The MSC5 is the biggest so far showcasing three keynote addresses, three special plenaries, about 190 papers organised into about 60 panels, one book launch, a film show, and a book fair participated by six national and international publishers. It has also brought together more than 200 participants from Malaysia and abroad. It has become the most significant and the biggest Malaysian studies congress ever held in this region.

Advancement of Social Science Education & Public Advocacy

The President reiterated the commitment of PSSM in advancing social science education, research, publication, capacity building, and public advocacy in Malaysia, as well as to represent the social science practitioners in their relations with other social scientists, the university, the government, and other national and international bodies. In respect of academic advancement, emphasis is given to high quality of teaching and research as well as capacity building of younger scholars in social science research and publication. The President stressed that PSSM is equally prepared to contribute to policy inputs on issues of social science and humanities. In the view of PSSM, the support and commitment from the Government in developing a corpus of high quality Malaysian social science and humanities based on Malaysian experience is urgently needed. Therefore, again, PSSM is putting forward the proposal for the setting up of the Malaysian National Social Science Council as the official umbrella body to oversee and fund research in the social sciences and humanities.

“Agree to Disagree”

On the issue of diversity of views, Prof. Rahman emphasised the need to uphold the principle and policy of MSC, that is, to ‘agree to disagree’. He believed that the principle can contribute towards creativity and innovation so necessary for progress and for the advancement of knowledge. He argued that diversity is the world’s reality and hence, we have to live with difference and respect difference. The Malaysian society itself is an example of diversity, and it has also devised its own ways of managing diversity. He further highlighted that the experience of Malaysian society has been studied and discussed extensively by many scholars from Malaysia and around the world, thus contributing to the universal corpus of knowledge on diversity, and ethno-religious relations. At

the same time, quite a number of countries with ethnic problems have turned to Malaysia for insights into some possible answers.

The President emphasised that Malaysia is currently going through some tough times during this transition to modernity with all its challenges to be a developed nation. These developments have brought to the surface the complex underlying realities of our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious existence as a nation. He argued that the country has to move forward – united, not divided, peaceful, and not conflict-and-tension-ridden. He strongly felt that under these circumstances, Malaysia all the more requires the broader perspectives and ‘soft’ insights of social science and humanities to help unravel the issues and suggest possible ways forward.

The Cabinet Directive

Against the backdrop of diversity, Prof. Rahman commented on the recent Cabinet directive not to discuss certain issues that may create ethno-religious misunderstanding and tension. As a result of the directive, he admitted that there is a degree of uncertainty among academia, regarding what can and cannot be discussed openly, and how such discussion should be engaged. He stressed that the social science community may be one of the most affected by this as the community’s subject of study is the complex reality of the society, for which an appropriate space for debate needs to be maintained. While the MSC5 Organising Committee has decided to cancel one panel in the Conference to comply with the official directive as a mark of respect, the President strongly urged the Government to give assurance that the directive is only temporary and to provide clarifications on the directive.

A Productive Conference

In concluding his speech, the President urged all the participants to take active participation in all discussions and make the Conference a productive and successful event. Also, he urged young scholars to join the post-MS5 capacity building workshop which is specifically designed for them to upgrade their papers for publication. Lastly, the President emphasised again that the MSC5 Organising Committee is honoured with the presence of the Deputy Minister of Higher Education at the Opening Ceremony. He hoped that YB Dato’ Ong will convey the views and concerns of PSSM to the Ministry and the Government. In his final remarks, he hoped that the proposal for the setting up of the Malaysian National Social Science Council will be viewed positively and taken up by the Government. *PSSM*

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Diverse Sub-themes & Multi-disciplinary Approach

Secondly, this conference covers a good range of diverse sub-themes and subjects. The focus has been on development in Malaysia which revolves around the development agenda, the post-development issues and agenda, and the implications for development studies. Papers presented have covered the sub-themes ranging from economic development to development and gender, from international relations to social change and cultural transformation, and from democracy to health and education, to name a few. Besides, there are papers presented on the broad subject of 'Malaysian Studies' conceived in the fashion of area studies. These papers cover a range of subjects on Malaysia or related to Malaysia such as Malaysian History, Politics, Economics, Business, Literature, Anthropology, Sociology, Media, etc., as well as those that provide an analysis adopting an inter-disciplinary approach as well as those that are thematic in nature.

Distinguished & Internationally Renowned Speakers

Thirdly, this conference has invited distinguished and internationally renowned speakers who are PSSM members themselves for the keynote addresses and special plenary. The first keynote address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Jomo K.S., the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs, United Nations & Immediate Past President of PSSM; the second keynote address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Shamsul A.B., the Director for Institute of the Malay World and Civilisation (ATMA) and Institute of Occidental Studies (IKON) at UKM; and the third keynote was delivered by Dr. Lim Teck Ghee, the Director of Policy Research Centre, ASLI. The keynote addresses provided a comprehensive understanding of the issues discussed and highlighted the challenges confronting all of us. The reflective nature of the keynote addresses has shed lights to the issues that this conference intended to address and has contributed to a more fruitful, productive and stimulating discussion.

Special Plenary

The three special plenary sessions were equally interesting. Special plenary I reflected on the development agenda and the future of Malaysia. The three panelists, Prof. Dr. Jomo K.S., Assoc. Prof. Dr Heng Siam Heng, and Assoc. Prof. Dr Fadzilah Majid-Cooke, addressed the question of what remains on the development agenda after decades of 'development' from the perspectives of political economy, development studies and gender. Special plenary II demonstrated a new inroads of

MSC5 in which three contemporary film practitioners - Yasmin Ahmad, Deepak Kumaran, and Hassan Mutalib were invited to share their views on the emerging New Malaysian Cinema. The last special plenary focused on the new directions in Malaysian social science research in which the three panelists, Prof. Dr Francis Loh, Assoc. Prof. Dr Mansor Mohd Noor, and Prof. Dr Jayum A. Jawan, reflected on the past development of social science in search of ways to move forward.

Capacity Building for Young Scholars

Overall this Conference has been a success and we hope to sustain the momentum to move forward. As our commitment to make a leap for MSC in the future, the PSSM Exco will conduct an in-depth post-mortem to identify the strengths, shortcomings and the way forward of MSC. Besides, a post MSC5 capacity building workshop for young scholars below the rank of associate professors, including graduate students, will be held soon. We urge the paper presenters to take effort to revise their papers for publication. Some papers on the sub themes of development can be published in a book on new thinking of development. Papers presented in the organized panels can be revised for some form of publication as well.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation to the Faculty of Human Ecology of UPM, its Dean and the staff for their invaluable help; the Japan Foundation KL for sponsoring the Japanese scholars to participate in one panel in MSC5; the keynote speakers, panelists, film directors, paper presenters, and all participants for contributing to the fruitful, productive and stimulating discussions. Last but not least, for the organizing committee, the sub committee members and the 'ground crew' drawn from among UKM & UPM graduate students, we offer them our appreciation and gratitude.

We hope you enjoy reading this special issue of MSC5 and look forward to receiving your comments and feedback. We sincerely hope that the in coming MSC6, due in 2008, will live up to our aspirations. Let us meet again in future in the same attitude of mutual respect, and scholarly approach so that we can learn from one another! *PSSM*

Opening Speech by the Minister of Higher Education

This is the second time that the Minister of Higher Education appeared on the MSC platform to deliver keynote speech and officiate the conference, the first being at MSC4 in 2004. This marks that the MSC series and the research of social science have gained greater attention from the Government. The Minister's speech was delivered by YB Dato' Ong Tee Keat, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education (picture) on behalf of the Minister of Higher Education.

The Minister was impressed by the broad participation of both local and foreign scholars at this Conference on Malaysian Studies. He perceived the coming together of an international audience, to explore a subject which is innately Malaysian, as a testament to the growing success of the quest of the nation in fostering greater internationalization in Malaysian institutions of higher learning, as well as positioning Malaysia as a hub of educational excellence.

The Importance of Social Science

In his speech, he made a note on the importance of social science in development. He argued that while it may be common practice to pay attention primarily to specific engines of economic growth, nonetheless, the fabric of society in any given country forms the foundation for making good on these promises. Therefore, while the knowledge economy places primacy on the advancement of science and technology, it would be unwise to forego reflection and deeper understanding of society, through initiatives in the social sciences and humanities. He stressed that Malaysia, in marching towards a developed nation status by 2020, will need to comprehend such factors in formulating development strategies. In this respect, the Government has incorporated such principles in the formulation of the 9th Malaysia Plan and National Mission in which emphasis has been placed on the development of human capital.

This leads to the question of the role played by universities and academia in national development. The Minister argued that the role of universities is to disseminate, preserve and create knowledge. The combination of study, research and the honing of skills in professional fields of study, lend to the creation of individuals more receptive to take their place as contributors to society. In this way, universities, are indeed the engines of human capital development and are well positioned to fuel a nation's global competitiveness.



Specific to the fraternity of social sciences, ensuring the advancement of knowledge in areas such as international relations, good governance and the economy, health and education and social change and cultural transformation, for example, will equip future generations with a better understanding of what it takes to nurture a progressive society. Indeed, extending such understanding to students in more technical fields of study could also lead to tangible and practical results. A balanced understanding of advances in technology with that of society's needs is fast becoming recognized as a potent combination for creating products with large and ready markets.

Strive for Excellence

He moved on to stress that the local universities should strive for excellence at the global level, and in order to realize this, scholars and academics who are at the frontline of education, must step up to the challenge. They can achieve this by being acutely aware of global performance benchmarks, but perhaps more so, by ensuring that they offer content and knowledge that is unique and of international value. In other words, Malaysian universities need to create knowledge, making use of the unique environment and society we live in.

In this respect, Malaysian academics and researchers are a fortunate lot indeed. In the area of life sciences, our equatorial surroundings provide boundless opportunities for making new discoveries. Closer to home for today's audience, the multi-ethnic and multi-religious Malaysian community provides a wonderful opportunity for studying and advancing knowledge in the humanities. These rich mixes of natural and socio-cultural resources are competitive advantages

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Official Dinner

Warm Welcome From Universiti Putra Malaysia

A Conference Dinner and Cultural Performance was hosted by Universiti Putra Malaysia at the 5th Residential College on 8 August 2006, the first evening of the Conference. All paper presenters and foreign participants were invited to the function.

The Vice Chancellor of Universiti Putra Malaysia, Prof. Dr Nik Mustapha R. Abdullah, delivered a welcome address during the dinner. He extended his warm welcome to all participants and appreciation to PSSM for organising the Conference with the Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Mission

In his speech, he outlined the mission of the University in research. In line with the national aspiration and agenda to spearhead the development of the agricultural sector, the University has embarked on cutting-edge research in six research clusters, namely Agriculture, Food, Forestry & Environment, Health, Social Science and lastly, Science, Technology & Engineering. In addition the university has also identified eight research foci that the university will emphasized. They are – (i) Food Crop Production; (ii) Plantation crop; (iii) Animal and Aquaculture Production; (iv) Bio-Health; (v) Value added bio products; (vi) Alternative Renewable Energy; (vii) Forest Products and Services; (viii) Halal Products.

A Significant Platform of Malaysian Studies

The Vice Chancellor gave high regard to the Conference. He perceived the Conference as an arena to bring together both local and foreign scholars who are working on issues related to Malaysia to share ideas, findings and seek solutions to the new emerging issues and chal-



The Vice Chancellor of Universiti Putra Malaysia, Prof. Dr. Nik Mustapha R. Abdullah, delivering his welcome address during the dinner

lenges. He believed that this Conference has become and will continue to become a platform for scholars interested to study about Malaysia to interact and initiate collaboration for the advancement of knowledge.

He hoped that the Conference would achieve the objectives outlined and would be able to put forward many suggestions on the way to move forward in tackling development issues in Malaysia. He believed that the discussions at the Conference will provide valuable input for the policy makers in shaping the future of the country.

As a final remark, he hoped that the local participants will take this opportunity to establish networking with the counterparts from other countries and will continue to conduct research about Malaysia for the betterment of the country. PSSM

Ucapan-Ucapan Dasar MSC5

Berikut adalah rumusan tiga ucapan dasar yang disampaikan oleh Prof. Jomo K.S., Prof. Shamsul A.B. dan Prof. Lim Teck Ghee dalam MSC5. Sumbangan idea ketiga-tiga sarjana ternama ini perlu diberi perhatian oleh ahli sains sosial. Mereka berjaya mengupas isu penting dalam bidang sains sosial dan memberi analisis yang bernas terhadap isu yang menyentuh pembangunan manusia, masyarakat dan negara. Apa yang menarik, latar belakang ketiga-tiga pembentang ucapan dasar yang berasal dari tanah air sendiri turut menandakan perkembangan sains sosial Malaysia telah menghalu ke satu tahap yang lebih tinggi.

“Malaysia Bolehkah?”

Ucapan Dasar Prof Jomo K. Sundaram

Pada hari pertama persidangan MSC5, Prof. Jomo telah memberikan ucapan dasarnya yang berjudul “‘Malaysia Bolehkah?’ The Analytical Basis for Better Economic Development”. Prof. Jomo bertugas sebagai Penolong Setiausaha Agung untuk Bahagian Pembangunan Ekonomi di Jabatan Hal-ehwal Ekonomi dan Sosial (DESA), Pertubuhan Bangsa-bangsa Bersatu (PBB) sejak Januari 2005.

Dalam ucapan dasarnya, Prof. Jomo telah meneliti perkembangan ekonomi Malaysia dengan perspektif makro. Beliau menekankan beberapa isu penting dalam meninjau sejarah perkembangan ekonomi Malaysia. Dalam usaha tersebut, Prof. Jomo membahagikan perkembangan ekonomi Malaysia kepada beberapa fasa, iaitu fasa sebelum kemerdekaan, fasa 1957-1969, fasa 1970-1985, fasa 1985-1998 dan fasa selepas 1998. Beliau menggunakan pendekatan klasikal dalam perbincangannya dan berjaya menimbulkan beberapa isu menarik dalam analisisnya.

Pembangunan ekonomi kolonial

Menurut Prof. Jomo, antara isu global yang membangkitkan ekonomi kolonial ialah peperangan saudara yang berlaku di Amerika Syarikat dan penciptaan kereta sehingga menyebabkan keperluan sumber bijih timah dan getah yang tinggi dalam pasaran ekonomi dunia. Keperluan tinggi terhadap kedua-dua bahan mentah tersebut menyebabkan ekonomi Semenanjung Malaysia dibangunkan dengan pesat sebelum mencapai kemerdekaannya. Walau bagaimanapun, ternyata pihak penjajah Inggeris yang memonopoli sehingga melipatgandakan keuntungan tersebut.

Ekonomi pasca-kolonial: dasar awam dan peranan swasta

Setelah mencapai kemerdekaan, tidak banyak perubahan berlaku dalam struktur penguasaan ekonomi. Penguasaan ekonomi masih berada dalam tangan orang asing seperti syarikat Sime Darby dan Lever Brothers. Namun, terdapat beberapa perkara yang penting berlaku seperti perkembangan perindustrian dan pembangunan



Prof. Jomo menyampaikan Ucapan di hari pertama MSC5 8 Ogos 2006.

luar bandar.

Pada fasa seterusnya, iaitu antara 1970-1981, beberapa perubahan penting berlaku dalam kehidupan masyarakat. Jurang ekonomi yang ketara berlaku antara kaum sehingga menyebabkan kerajaan campur tangan untuk mengagihkan peluang ekonomi melalui dasar awam terutama Dasar Ekonomi Baru (DEB). Penemuan sumber minyak petroleum seterusnya menyebabkan perkembangan ekonomi Malaysia ke arah perindustrian berat di bawah pimpinan Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, mantan Perdana Menteri Malaysia. Antara perindustrian berat yang membawa perubahan signifikan kepada negara adalah projek kereta nasional, iaitu Proton Saga dan juga perindustrian besi keluli.

Menurut Prof. Jomo perkembangan ekonomi Malaysia pada tahap seterusnya, iaitu 1985-1998 dibuka untuk penglibatan sektor swasta. Misalnya dalam bidang pendidikan beberapa universiti dan kolej swasta telah ditubuhkan. Selain itu, pertukaran mata wang antara Yen Jepun dan Dollar Amerika Syarikat turut menyebabkan Jepun menempat semula kilangnya di Malaysia.

Rent-seeking - penghalang utama

Pada fasa selepas 1998, Prof. Jomo menekankan bahawa ekonomi Malaysia lebih dipengaruhi oleh pasaran

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saham berbanding sistem perbankan. Polisi kerajaan ke atas kawalan pertukaran mata wang antara Ringgit dan Dolar Amerika Syarikat turut dianalisis. Prof. Jomo merumuskan bahawa kejayaan ekonomi Malaysia pada masa akan datang adalah tertakluk kepada menangani masalah rasuah dalam bentuk *rent-seeking*.

“Membentuk Semula Sains Sosial”

Ucapan Dasar Prof Shamsul A.B.

Pada hari kedua persidangan, Prof. Shamsul A.B., Pengarah di Institute of the Malay World & Civilization (ATMA) dan Institute of Occidental Studies (IKON) di Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), telah membentangkan ucapan dasar yang berjudul “Reshaping Social Sciences in Malaysia: Some ideas and Action Plans”.

Kepentingan sains sosial dalam perancangan pembangunan

Dalam ucapan dasarnya, Prof. Shamsul menggunakan contoh Unit Perancangan Ekonomi (Economic Planning Unit atau EPU) untuk menekankan

bahawa pengetahuan Sains Sosial memainkan peranan yang amat penting dalam perancangan pembangunan Malaysia.

Prof. Shamsul menekankan peri pentingnya sains sosial, namun hanya segelintir sahaja pakar sains sosial dipilih oleh kerajaan sebagai penasihat. Perkara ini adalah begitu ironik kerana hampir 90 peratus pegawai kerajaan dan hampir 80 peratus ahli Kabinet Malaysia dan Menteri Besar merupakan produk siswazah sains sosial.

Prof. Shamsul berpendapat pernah ada pembahagian berlaku dalam kalangan ahli sains sosial di Malaysia. Salah satu langkah penting yang telah diambil untuk menyatupadukan ahli sains sosial adalah melalui penubuhan Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia (PSSM). Selepas itu, wakil PSSM kerap diundang oleh beberapa kementerian untuk menyertai mesyuarat seperti Social Science Steering Committee Meeting. Tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa mesyuarat tersebut adalah berguna untuk kerajaan memilih wakil dari kalangan ahli akademik dan pegawai kerajaan untuk menghadiri Penghimpunan Agung Majlis Sains Sosial Kebangsaan dari seluruh dunia yang dianjurkan oleh International Social Science Council (ISSC), ataupun untuk melibatkan diri sebagai

pemerhati dalam projek antarabangsa yang mempunyai bantuan penyelidikan yang besar.

Penglibatan ahli sains sosial terhad

Namun, Prof. Shamsul berpendapat bahawa penglibatan ahli sains sosial masih tidak mencukupi kerana Malaysia tidak mempunyai Majlis Sains Sosial Kebangsaan (National Social Science Council). Sehingga hari ini, taraf penglibatan ahli sains sosial masih sebagai pemerhati dan mereka juga tidak layak memohon bantuan untuk penyelidikan sains sosial di peringkat antarabangsa.

Selain itu, jumlah bantuan penyelidikan dan pembangunan (R&D) yang diperuntukkan oleh kerajaan untuk sains sosial kurang daripada 10 peratus berbanding projek Sains dan Teknologi (S&T). Prof. Shamsul berpendapat bahawa ahli sains sosial telah dipinggirkan dari segi penglibatan dalam Majlis Sains Kebangsaan

Malaysia (Malaysian National Science Council) dan juga pemohonan bantuan penyelidikan.

Kepentingan penubuhan MNSSC & ASSK

Oleh sebab itu, Prof. Shamsul mencadangkan perlunya penubuhan Majlis Sains Sosial Kebangsaan Malaysia (MNSSC) yang berlainan dengan Majlis Sains Kebangsaan walaupun

sudah adanya PSSM. MNSSC harus memainkan peranan utama untuk menyebarkan pemahaman dunia sosial dengan merangsangkan sains tingkah laku dan sosial dan menggunakan pengetahuan tersebut untuk menangani masalah utama di Malaysia. Selain itu, ia juga berperanan menggalakkan kerjasama antara organisasi di Malaysia supaya kerja sama antara pelbagai disiplin berlaku dalam bentuk penyelidikan di kalangan ahli MNSSC.

Menurut Prof Shamsul, langkah yang sama penting seperti penubuhan MNSSC ialah mewujudkan Akademi Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan (ASSK). Pembentukan akademi tersebut bertujuan untuk membolehkan ahli sains sosial akademik dan profesional bersidang dan mengesahkan kewujudan mereka untuk penglibatan dalam sektor awam, swasta dan komuniti. Beliau percaya bahawa dengan sumber yang sedia ada, kita mampu menubuhkan MNSSC dan seterusnya ASSK.

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Prof. Shamsul A.B. sedang menyampaikan ucapatama pada 9 Ogos 2006.

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“Agenda yang Belum Diselesaikan”

Ucapan Dasar Prof Lim Teck Ghee

Ucapan dasar ketiga dibentangkan oleh Prof. Lim Teck Ghee pada hari terakhir persidangan. Beliau kini bertugas sebagai Pengarah di Center for Public Policy Studies, ASLI di Kuala Lumpur. Teks ucapan beliau berjudul “Development in Malaysia: The Unfinished Agenda”.

Prof. Lim menyatakan bahawa walaupun banyak perubahan berlaku di Malaysia, namun masih banyak perkara yang tidak berubah. Menurut Prof. Lim sunguhpun Dasar Ekonomi Baru (DEB) dan Dasar Pembangunan Nasional (DPN) telah dilaksanakan, dan kini Malaysia menjalani Dasar Wawasan 2020, namun masih terdapat agenda yang belum diselesaikan. Dalam perbincangan ini, Prof. Lim menyentuh beberapa cabaran dalam Wawasan 2020, terutama cabaran pertama hingga kelima sebagai agenda yang masih belum diselesaikan.

Metodologi & statistik penilaian pembangunan dipertikaikan

Prof. Lim turut mempersoalkan isu metodologi dalam penilaian pembangunan negara khususnya dalam aspek menangani isu kemiskinan dan agihan pendapatan. Beliau mempertikaikan kebolehppercayaan dan kesahan angka statistik yang digunakan sebagai garis taraf kemiskinan yang ditentukan dalam konteks tahun 1960-an dan 1970-an. Menurut Prof. Lim sekiranya piawai taraf kemiskinan Bank Dunia digunapakai, maka pada tahun 2002 sendiri terdapat sebanyak 9.3 peratus atau 2.2 juta penduduk Malaysia hidup di bawah garis kemiskinan. Angka ini merupakan 10 kali ganda angka yang ditunjukkan dalam laporan Kerajaan yang menggunakan pendapatan garis kemiskinan yang tersendiri.

Prof. Lim mempertikaikan kebolehppercayaan data statistik Kerajaan tentang ekonomi dan sosial yang amat penting dalam penggunaannya untuk membentuk konsep, merangka dasar atau polisi yang neutral, membuat keputusan dan menilai semula keberkesanan polisi ekonomi dan sosial. Adakah data statistik Kerajaan boleh dipercayai? Bukan itu sahaja, data statistik juga amat penting untuk ahli sains sosial membentuk persepsi, parameter perbincangan dan perjumpaan kajian. Selain isu kemiskinan, Prof. Lim juga menggunakan contoh lain seperti isu imigran di Sabah untuk menonjolkan masalah kebolehppercayaan dan availability statistik resmi.

Pentingkan nilai integriti

Dalam hal tersebut, Prof. Lim menekankan bahawa statistik Kerajaan seharusnya mementingkan nilai integriti, mewakili realiti, serta bebas daripada segala pengaruh seperti politik, rasuah, bias dan penipuan. Perkara ini adalah penting untuk memberi layanan yang saks-

ma kepada kumpulan minoriti di Malaysia. Maka, ahli sains sosial di Malaysia harus memikul beban ini untuk memastikan hasil kajian dan statistik yang jujur, berkualiti, tersendiri (independent) dan berkebolehppercayaan dengan menggunakan kaedah yang telus.



Dr. Lim Teck Ghee menyampaikan ucapatama pada 10 Ogos 2006

PSSM sebagai pemantau

Prof. Lim menyeru agar pihak PSSM harus berfungsi sebagai pemantau untuk memastikan segala statistik kerajaan dan penyelidikan sosial mempunyai integriti, bebas daripada pengaruh politik, rasuah dan pemalsuan. Beliau turut mencadangkan agar beberapa langkah diambil oleh PSSM seperti menggariskan kod tatacara dan tatamoral untuk memandu sistem statistik nasional, menubuhkan jawatankuasa statistik sosial saintifik untuk memantau integriti statistik Kerajaan.

Peranan ahli sosial sains

Berhubungan dengan perkara pertama, dalam perkara kedua, Prof. Lim menimbulkan persoalan tentang apakah peranan ahli sains sosial sama ada secara individu ataupun kolektif. Beliau bersetuju dengan Azly Rahman, penulis blog dalam Malaysiakini tentang adakah peranan ahli sains sosial dikuasai oleh kelas pemerintah dan menghasilkan tulisan yang hanya dikehendaki oleh mereka?

Dalam kesimpulannya, dalam konteks Wawasan 2020, Prof. Lim melihat pembangunan Malaysia sebagai agenda yang belum diselesaikan. Seperti dalam ucapan Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad yang dipetik oleh beliau, “pembangunan Malaysia bukan merujuk kepada pembangunan ekonomi sahaja, tetapi ia juga merujuk kepada dimensi lain seperti sosial, politik, agama dan budaya dalam konteks demokrasi dan kepelbagaian kebudayaan”. Maka, ahli sains sosial harus mendefinisi dan memperhalusi agenda negara sementara menangani isu yang berkaitan dengan ras, agama, ekuiti, penyusunan semula ekonomi dan masyarakat, kebebasan, masalah rasuah dan pemerintahan. *PSSM*

IMAGES OF MSC5



Part of the audience at the MSC5 opening ceremony



Dr. Laily Paim, Dean, Faculty Human Ecology, UPM



Prof. Dato' Dr. Abdul Rahman Embong delivering his Presidential Address



Parallel session in progress



Parallel session in progress



PSSM Exco after closing of MSC5

IMAGES OF MSC5



Part of the audience at one of the keynote addresses



Registration



MSC5 Conference Dinner



Registration



Special Plenary III. L-R: Dr. Jayum, Dr. Diana (Chair), Dr. Mansor & Dr. Francis Loh



Lunch break



Participants at Book Fair

Special Plenary I

'After-Development' in Malaysia: Reflections on the Development Agenda and the Future

The panel comprised of Prof. Jomo K.S, Assoc. Prof. Heng Siam Heng and Associate Prof. Dr. Fadzilah Majid-Cooke. The panel was chaired by Prof. Dr Abdul Rahman Embong.

In his opening remarks introducing the panel, the chairman stressed that the 1980s was supposed to be the "Third Decade of Development", but the lack of development has led United Nations to call it the "lost" decade. We have gone along the road of rapid economic development for the last 40 years, so now we have to re-examine and identify new agendas of development. The panel aimed to discuss three key related questions. What remains of the development agenda that was supposed to have been implemented? What are the new agendas in development? In terms of the corpus of knowledge of development studies, what is the implication of all these to development studies.

What Kind of Development?

Prof. Jomo related the experiences of development in the world in the last four decades. He noted that there is a growing inequality in the world today. According to Prof. Jomo, between 1960 to 1970, there was rapid economic growth. The 1980s to 1990s, however, was characterised by slower economic growth. He was not sure if "development" actually occurred for some countries such as Africa.

Prof. Heng started his discussion by asking the question: What kind of development are we thinking about? He also questioned: Is it post-development or are we searching for what development is? According to Prof. Heng, there is a tendency for social development to be embedded in economic development. He called for a rethinking of such an approach. Prof. Heng argued that



L-R: Dr. Heng Siam-Heng, Dr. Jomo K.S., Dr. Abdul Rahman Embong (Chair), & Dr. Fadzilah Majid-Cooke

economic development should be embedded in social development. Economic development should not ignore such issues as cultural heritage, environmental degradation, crime including spirituality.

How Knowledge In Development Is Produced

The third panelist discussed the construction of knowledge in development studies. According to Dr. Fadzilah, there is a tendency to "orientalise" East Malaysia. She argued for the need to reexamine the way knowledge of development is produced, particularly on gender relations and indigenous community in Sabah and Sarawak. Understanding the way knowledge is produced is deemed important because it involves power and system of support. Fadhilah's discussion was guided by three key questions: how is knowledge about a phenomenon formed? Who has the authority to speak? What are the effects of being spoken for? On how Sabah and Sarawak has been spoken for in academic and political discourse, Dr. Fadzilah cited two ways Sabah and Sarawak has been spoken for. Firstly, in research projects that are supposed to cover Malaysia, they tend to ignore the complexities of Sabah and Sarawak. There is a tendency to generalise and under-represent Sabah and Sarawak. Secondly, findings of research on Peninsular Malaysia are assumed to be applicable to Sabah and Sarawak. *PSSM*

Special Plenary II (Round Table of Film Practitioners)

New Malaysian Cinema- New Imaginings?



Left - Right: Yasmin Ahmad (film director), Prof. Wan Zawawi Ibrahim (Chairperson, Vice President of PSSM), Deepak Kumaran (film director) and Hassan Mutalib (film critic).

The forum for Malaysian film practitioners, titled: “New Malaysian Cinema- New Imaginings?”, consists of Yasmin Ahmad (Film director of “Rabun”, and the multi award winning “Sepet’ and ‘Gubra’ fame), Deepak Kumaran (director of the award winning ‘Chemman Chaalai’) and Hassan Mutalib (Film Critic), moderated by Prof. Zawawi Ibrahim. The aim of the forum is to expose the conference members to themes and identities expressed in the new Malaysian Cinema, especially the works of the Malaysian independent film makers that have captured the global film

festival circuits in the last decade or so. The uniqueness of this new movement is that it is a multicultural force consisting of a new generation of digital film makers (which, apart from the two panelists, includes names such as Amir Muhammad, Ho Yuhang, James Lee, and Tan Chui Mui). The forum ended with a privileged preview of Yasmin Ahmad’s latest yet unreleased film, the same evening, “Mukhsin”, followed by an enthusiastic Q & A session between the Director and a very appreciative conference audience. *PSSM*

Opening Speech

continued from page 5

and hence, Malaysian scholars should build on these strengths and assert themselves as world-leading experts in these areas.

Research Universities

According to the Minister, the Government has taken initiatives to help the nation forge up the knowledge hierarchy, from the ordinary or the mundane to that where our quality and niche is securely established. A number of universities have been identified as Research Universities to serve as lead institutions in terms of research and

development (R&D). On top of that, he suggested that our research to employ comparative perspectives, so that we know the progress of institutions in other countries, thus enabling us to benchmark ourselves within the region and the world. Furthermore, research findings and output must enter the public domain in the form of books, journal articles and policy papers, so that they can have the necessary impact on academia, policy making industry, and the public at large. *PSSM*

Special Plenary III

New Direction for Malaysian Social Science Research

The final plenary of this Conference took the opportunity to reflect on the progress of social sciences in Malaysia, after thirty years of promoting social science research by PSSM and the teaching of social sciences in local universities. Three panelists, Prof. Dr. Francis Loh (USM), Prof. Dr. Jayum A. Jawan (UPM), and Assoc. Prof. Dr Mansor Mohd Noor (UUM), were invited to shed lights on the issue. (picture on page 11)

As pointed out by the Chair, Dr. Diana Wong, it is essential to examine the path we have come from and the current state of social science in Malaysia, before deciding over the way forward. In general, social science teaching and research has been marginalized in this country. More attention should be given to the development of social science. In this respect, government policy should take into account the developing of social science and it should be given the priority in policy making.

Historical Evolution of Malaysia Social Science Research

Prof. Francis Loh addressed the issue by looking into the historical evolution of Malaysian social science research. According to him, in the periods of 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, a multi-disciplinary historical approach has been adopted in social science research. A good number of high quality social science research was produced and a good amount of knowledge was generated. Nonetheless, the trend has changed since late 1990s. This period witnessed the massification of higher education in Malaysia where public universities were expanded and private universities were established. There was unprecedented growth in social science programmes and the production of social scientists. Multi-disciplinary historical approach in social science research was on the decline, especially among the younger social scientists. Instead, quantitative research has become dominant in social science research. A great number of behaviorists and positivists have emerged. History is no longer being incorporated into this kind of quantitative research.

Revive Interest In History

What needs to be done? Prof. Loh suggested that interest in history needs to be revived. PSSM may work with the Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia (Malaysian Historical Society) toward this end. Theoretical and comparative re-

search should be encouraged. This kind of research may include comparison between the present and the past and development situation between the Peninsular and East Malaysia. Also, we should extend research from one's own ethno-religious community to the study of the others. One way of achieving this goal is to form research team to conduct comparative studies. The Department of History at USM is a successful example. They conduct research on history with a bottom-up approach which does not require huge funding. They initiate independent research, circulate papers among colleagues and friends for debate, revise the papers and publish them. Graduate students are invited to join the research projects.

In addition, a new terrain of research should be explored. It is time to move beyond studies on anti-colonial struggle. Too much attention has been given to national history. There is a need to recover the history of the subaltern groups. Lastly, Prof. Loh proposed that scholars to be engaged with issue of globalization – to understand how it impacts on the locals. Research on globalization should not only focus at the national level but down to the community level by examining its impact on the marginalized community.

Social Science Research on Sarawak

In his speech, Prof. Jayum drew attention to the kind of research that has been done in Sarawak and what more needs to be done for social science research in Sarawak. He argued that the social science research on Sarawak has been quite modest up to the colonial time. It started with simple daily record of what colonial officers did and the records of travels made by the colonial officers. Social science research at the later stage was more toward anthropological studies which were carried out by colonial officers. This kind of research, nonetheless, has little benefit to the indigenous community.

In relating to the earlier comment that social science research is not important in Malaysia, Prof. Jayum suggested that the same observation can be found in the research on Sarawak and Sabah. This is because there has not been action based research. Research carried out by the scholars have not been able to contribute to the development process in these states. This leads to the question of how research on Sabah and Sarawak could be done in order to bring benefits to the people and not just for the sake of research.

Laporan Persediaan MSC5

Persediaan Seawal 2005

Persediaan untuk menganjurkan MSC5 telah dijalankan bermula tahun 2005. Jawatankuasa Pelaksana telah diwujudkan yang terdiri daripada tiga peringkat, iaitu Jawatankuasa Induk (Organising Committee), Jawatankuasa Bersama (Joint-committee) dan Jawatankuasa Kecil (Sub-committee) yang melibatkan kerjasama erat daripada kalangan seramai 100 orang yang terdiri daripada exco PSSM, ahli PSSM, kakitangan Fakulti Ekologi Manusia (FEM), UPM serta kakitangan di peringkat UPM.



Salah satu mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Induk MSC5

Prof. Abdul Rahman Embong merupakan pengerusi Jawatankuasa Induk dan timbalannya, Prof. Madya Dr. Laily Haji Paim, Dekan FEM. Di peringkat Jawatankuasa Kecil, sepuluh jawatankuasa terlibat secara aktif, iaitu Jawatankuasa Program, Pendaftaran, Makanan dan Minuman, Publisiti, Protokol, Hospitaliti, Teknikal, Pengangkutan dan Keselamatan, Logistik dan Tugas-tugas Khas.

Jawatankuasa Bersama telah mengadakan sekurang-kurangnya enam pertemuan secara rasmi di FEM dalam usaha untuk merancang, menyelaras dan melaksanakan

persidangan ini dengan jayanya.

Komitmen tinggi yang diberikan oleh FEM selaku tuan rumah dalam menyediakan pelbagai kemudahan fizikal untuk persidangan termasuk aspek teknikal, logistik, pengangkutan dan hospitaliti. Dari segi perjalanan seminar, sebanyak tujuh buah bilik seminar dan satu dewan utama telah disediakan bagi menjayakan tujuh sesi serentak setiap hari bagi sembilan sesi utama yang dijalankan selama tiga hari. *PSSM*

continued from page 14

Another observation made by Prof. Jayum is that Sabah & Sarawak have been marginalized in research within the context of Malaysia. Most research have been focused on peninsular Malaysia and are not integrative in nature. More research on Malaysia, and not only on peninsular Malaysia, should be carried out. Also, the research should go beyond the three major ethnics, namely Malay, Indian, and Chinese, as the people in the country consists of more than these three ethnics. This attitude of ignoring the peoples and the states in East Malaysia needs to be changed and social scientists should initiate the change.

Speaking from his personal experience, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mansor Mohd Noor highlighted the influence of social science on individual, society and the nation.

One's training in social science would influence how he defines his identity. He pointed out that the stereotyping of Malaysian that based on one's ethnicity, religion and values has become a major barrier in understanding the society and its people. A barrier to social science research is the lack of open discussion on key issues such as citizenship and religion. As a result, there are many issues unresolved in our society.

He suggested that for the development of social science in Malaysia, three broad focuses should be given priority: the capacity building for young scholars, multi-ethnic based research whenever applicable, and linking social scientists to policy makers. *PSSM*

Comments on MSC5

MSC - Best Conference for Malaysian Studies Specialists

By Professor Mako Yoshimura, Hosei University, Japan

The 5th International Malaysian Studies Conference (MSC5) was held at UPM for 8-10 August 2006. I would like to congratulate PSSM and UPM as the organizer for its great success.

As many of us has recognised, the MSC is the best conference for Malaysian studies specialists. We can study the latest researches and discussion on Malaysian studies. We can present our own recent researches, exchange opinions and deepen the discussion with colleagues. We can meet friends and develop academic networking. I enjoy meeting my (old and new) friends from all over Malaysia and the world (including Japan) at every MSC.

I saw that this MSC5 was the biggest and there were about 200 papers in 60 panels. The Panels covered various topics and it is very difficult to check all the papers and panels I was interested in as it is arranged in 6 parallel sessions.

Besides panels, I benefited from three keynote speeches by Dr. Jomo (now in UNDESA), Prof. Shamsul AB (ATMA, UKM) and Dr. Lim Teck Ghee (ASLI). Speeches by Jomo and Shamsul were excellent (always). The speech by Lim was also very special to me because it was my first time to meet him while I read his works since I was a graduate student. It is great to have local well-known scholar as keynote speakers since it is a Malaysian studies conference. In addition, plenary panels were enjoyable and the showing of Yasmin Ahmad's latest film, *Mukshin* and the post-film discussion were delightful.

I organised a panel titled "Malaysia-Japan Relations: Re-Visiting the Past, Re-Visioning the Future" (Thanks to Rashila for the title idea!). The idea started by the conversation with Prof. Rahman Embong who asked me about the possibility for PSSM to work together with the Japan Society for Southeast Asian Studies (JSSEAS) which I serve as an exco member in charge of international relations. I asked Prof. Hara Fujio (Nanzan University) who is currently the President of the Japan Association for Malaysian Studies (JAMS) and Prof. Lee Poh Ping (UKM) who is the President of the Malaysian Association for Japan Studies to join the panel and Dr. Tang agreed to serve as a chair and discussant. JSSEAS approved the panel and recognised the first step to collaborate with PSSM. I also appreciate the Japan Foundation KL Office (Mr. Shimoyama, the Director) and Prof. Hara to support and contribute for the panel/MSC5.

It must be a valuable opportunity for junior researchers such as graduate students to present their research so that they could get useful suggestions and advices by specialists for the theme. At the MSC5, I attended several panels organised by local graduate students with their academic supervisors. I enjoyed their research and discussion at their academic devue (I supposed) at an international conference and observed how the younger generation was trained. In Japan, too, I always encourage Japanese junior researcher, especially PhD candidates to present their research at MSC.

I attended all the MSCs since the first one under Prof. Jomo at UM. The principle "no paper, no presentation" was succeeded since the beginning and the quality of presentation/discussion has been good. The size of the conferences grew bigger but the PSSM Exco members headed by the conference director, Dr. Rashila Ramli worked well in collaboration with UPM staff (and graduate students of UKM and UPM, thanks!). The free internet service was also useful to check e-mails during the conference. Some ideas such as conference rooms with colour (not with room number) could be applied to other conferences as I also work on international conferences/workshops as an organising staff.

It seemed that the international participants were less than the last time. The "Japanese gangs" who consisted of the majority of international participants were less than the last time but they enjoyed the conference.

I truly enjoyed the conference. Yet, if I am asked, I might have several suggestions. It might be better to provide the information about the venue location on the earlier announcement (as international participants know the name of UPM but the location...for instance), to put a list of papers included in CD-ROM (as we did not at panels), to consider the extra transportation for the conference dinner (as I only saw international participants who stayed at conference hotels then), and so on. Also, while I enjoyed Bahasa Melayu presentation (although I did not say I understood 100%), the language may be a problem (barrier) for some international participants who are not familiar with Bahasa Melayu. So it might be useful to notice the panel presentation language at the lobby if they are different from the language of papers.

Once again, I sincerely appreciate Prof. Rahman

Statements on MSC5

Withdrawal of Panel on Religion and National Unity

Editor's Note: The Panel on "Religion, Interfaith and National Unity" scheduled for the third day of MSC5 had to be withdrawn by the Organising Committee. Below are two statements as a reaction to the cancellation. We also publish the relevant passage in the President's Address (see page 19) explaining the cancellation.

Statement by CPPS (Centre for Public Policy Studies) ASLI

The CPPS welcomes the reminder given by the Home Minister that all groups, including Muslims, need to abide by various decisions arrived at to ensure that national unity is preserved and to avoid creating unnecessary tension in the country. The Centre agrees that no group should have a right to special status or privilege in the country above other groups or citizens beyond that explicitly stated in the Constitution, and we support the Government in its efforts to ensure equal treatment before the law of all citizens and all groups.

At the same time, the Centre considers it important for the authorities and other stake holders to recognize and respect the clear distinction between public and academic space in discussions on the key issues that affect the nation. Academic inquiry and discourse on vital matters of society and economy is not only imperative but it also needs to be nurtured and protected, not avoided and discouraged. In this respect the Centre regrets the further erosion of academic freedom in the country as evidenced by the cancellation of a planned discussion on religion

and national unity at the recent 5th International Malaysian Studies Conference. This move has upset both local and international participants at the meeting. Academic meetings dealing with current social, cultural and political developments are commonplace all over the world. The decision to scrap the planned discussion – apparently on the basis of unfounded concerns over the subject matter and some of the invited speakers – smacks of narrow minded intolerance and a blinkered understanding of the function of academia. The cancellation move was uncalled for, unwise and undermines academic independence and integrity.

The Centre hopes that the convenors of the conference will conduct a full enquiry and review of the cancellation so that appropriate lessons can be learnt to prevent a repetition and the cause of academic freedom, integrity and inquiry can be better protected.

Dr Lim Teck Ghee
11 August 2006

Statement by Sisters-In-Islam

Sisters in Islam regrets that the organisers of the Fifth International Malaysian Studies Conference held at UPM recently felt pressured to cancel the panel on "Religion, Interfaith and National Unity."

We share Prof. Datuk Abdul Rahman Embong, President of the Malaysian Social Science Association (PSSM)'s valid concern that certain developments of late are taking a toll on academic freedom, and have grave implications on the free flow of ideas and academic discourses on various complex issues facing our nation.

This emerging trend in suppressing the right to openly discuss matters concerning the public is disheartening, especially as it is being imposed on those who are merely peacefully practising their Constitutional rights – freedom of speech, assembly and association (Article 10) and freedom of religion (Article 11).

It should be noted that this is in contrast to the continued, unfettered dissemination of wrongful information and malicious rumours, as well as the formation

of groups and alliances by those who intend to undermine the Constitution and silence such open discussions.

We should take cognizance of Imam Malik's statement that "Diversity of opinion is Allah's gift to the ummah" and any imposition of one particular opinion without public consultation would be tantamount to destroying the divine gift.

We urge all Malaysians to uphold Article 10 of our Constitution that guarantees freedom of expression for all. Peaceful dialogues and rational debates should in fact, be promoted for better understanding among Malaysians.

We cannot allow violence and intimidation to be used to infringe on our basic rights, because the right to speak belongs to all Malaysians and not to a select few.

Sisters in Islam
August 2006

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Embong and PSSM for the great effort for MSC5 as well as all the staff and participants because we benefited from the conference as a researcher on Malaysian studies. I hope to develop our discussion and collaboration for Malaysian studies. And hope

MSC5 2006

Participants' Impressions

How far the MSC5 was deemed useful and meaningful among the participants? Has the conference benefited the participants or it is just "another conference" for them? Our Editorial Team managed to gather some feedbacks.

Chiok Phaik Fern: meaningful platform

"...It is very meaningful for each of us who have been taking part in the process of our country development..." said Ms Chiok Phaik Fern, a lecturer from the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. She expressed that MSC5 had provided a platform for local as well as international academicians to contribute their insights to the understanding of the development of Malaysia.

Chiok stated that she enjoyed the most the plenary sessions whereby she was given a chance to listen to social science scholars debating on the major trends in development studies as well as reflecting on the status of social science researches for the past decades.

She acknowledged that the conference has conveyed an essential message. She said, "... as our country is heading towards modernization and to become developed country by year 2020, instead of arts and social sciences, ICT and pure sciences have become the driving force of Malaysia development. However, human and society issues are still very much close to our heart and need to be addressed while striving for modernization as by ignoring it, modernization will just become material advancement without having the sense of humanity and it won't last longer..."

Chiok also suggested that in future the MSC committee members can engage the policy makers as well as politicians in the discussion. For her, MSC can be a good platform to engage them in the discourse and the source of reference for them in drafting the developmental policies.

Dr Ooi Kee Beng: wide-ranging subjects

Meanwhile, Dr Ooi Kee Beng, Coordinator of Malaysia Study Program at ISEAS Singapore, regretted the cancellation of the Sisters in Islam (SIS) panel on "Religion and National Unity" where papers titled "Malaysia and Islam", "Can separate and different lead to justice and equality" and "Minorities in Malaysia" would have been presented.

In general, Dr Ooi, the author of *Era of Transition: Mahathir after Malaysia*, expressed that

the three-day conference kept quite well to schedule. The subjects touched upon were quite wide-ranging, and most of the major Malaysian universities took part. He personally found that the Penang (USM) presence there very strong.

Besides, Dr Ooi also commented that by handing out the softcopies of articles in CD and only few hardcopies of papers were available, made it difficult for participants to follow the arguments closely. No matter how, he understood that the cost factor had to be considered by the organizers. As a final note, he said, "For my part, I gained a good idea about what sort of academic research in the social sciences are being done in, and on, Malaysia, and I also got to meet some people whom I so far have know only by name..."

From Dr. Haslinda Abdullah, Fakulti Ekologi Manusia, UPM

Pengalaman pertama menyertai MSC5 amat menarik dan berharga. Saya mendapat banyak maklumat dan rakan baharu dari pelbagai bidang. Perbincangan yang dikupas merangsang minda dan memberikan motivasi untuk saya terus memberi sumbangan dalam dunia akademik.

Yuko Kato: great opportunity for networking

It was a very fruitful experience for me attending at MSC5. The presentations and discussions were all very interesting and also useful updating the idea of study which was related to my own. Actually for the international scholars as me, it was a great opportunity to catch up what was the current theme of Malaysian studies. I could get to know many scholars from all over the world and exchange research idea. This time I attended as an observer. However I regret I should have presented a paper since each presenter had received very good comments from the audience as well as the chairman. The organization of the conference was also excellent. Only one thing that I felt sorry was there were some presentations just canceled. I think it shouldn't be allowed for the presenters to withdraw once they register with the conference. *PSSM*

Ms. Yuko Kato, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University

Excerpts

Presidential Address at the Opening of MSC5, 8 August 2006, on Cancellation of Panel

“The MSC since its inception has adopted an open and proactive policy; our principle is we welcome and respect diversity of views, and we “agree to disagree” -- a principle, we feel, can contribute towards creativity and innovation so necessary for progress generally and for the advancement of knowledge. This is the dynamism of MSC, and it is this ‘X-factor’ that makes it interesting, lively and enriching. This is also the principle and the policy of MSC5 and we are happy that we have gathered together so many panels and papers on a complex variety of topics.....

However, of late, certain developments have been taking place which, to our mind, may have implications for a free flow of ideas and academic discourse on various complex issues facing our nation, and may in some ways affect our core business as social science scholars. We have learnt from the media about the recent Cabinet directive not to discuss certain issues that may create ethno-religious misunderstanding and tension. Under the Announcement

current scenario, I must admit there is a degree of uncertainty among academia, regarding what can and cannot be discussed openly, and how such discussion should be engaged. The social science community may be one of the most affected by this as our subject of study is the complex reality of our society, for which an appropriate space for debate needs to be maintained. We however understand the need for caution and respect for the parameters, and we hope and trust that the Cabinet directive on this issue is only temporary. As a mark of respect, the MSC5 Organising Committee has decided not to proceed with one panel in this conference since it may be seen as not complying with the official directive. However, we would very much appreciate it if we can be enlightened on this latest development and assurance given so that our concerns and uncertainty can be put to rest. It is our humble opinion that such briefings to seek clarifications and obtain inputs on the directive may be timely and necessary.”

Post–MSC5 Capacity Building Workshop for Young Scholars

As part of the initiatives of PSSM to advance Malaysian studies and enhance the research and analytical skills of young scholars, the post-MSC5 capacity building workshop for young scholars will be organized on the 22-23, January, and 26-27, February of 2007, at IKMAS, UKM. The workshop will be conducted in two sessions as we have received encouraging response from young scholars.

The Objectives

The workshop aims to assist young scholars to revise and strengthen their paper delivered at MSC5 so that they can be upgraded for publication in journal or books. In addition, we hope to facilitate the interaction of senior scholars with younger scholars with a view to enhance capacity building of the latter in research and also publication.

Eligibility

The workshop is opened for young scholars who have presented papers at MSC5 and are members of PSSM. By ‘young scholars’, we mean graduates and young academics below the rank of associate professor.

Workshop Format

The workshop will be conducted in parallel sessions. The sessions will consist of paper presentations by workshop participants on their areas of research. Inputs in the form of comments, criticisms, and suggestions will be given by the senior scholars as well as other workshop participants to improve the paper and the research undertaken.

Registration

Those who are interested to join the workshop, please contact the Secretariat at the following:

Lai Ngan Yin

email: geemdueji@yahoo.com

Dr Sarjit Singh Gill

email: sarjit@putra.upm.edu.my

The deadline for registration is 20 December, 2006. All participants are required to pay RM50 for registration fee.

Pelancaran Buku

Semasa Majlis Perasmian MSC5, Timbalan Menteri Pengajian Tinggi iaitu Datuk Ong Tee Kiat turut melancarkan 8 buah buku yang dihasilkan oleh ahli-ahli PSSM. Buku yang dilancarkan dalam bidang sains sosial tersebut diterbitkan oleh penerbit antarabangsa dan tempatan. Berikut ialah senarai buku yang telah dilancarkan:

1. *Feminism and the Women's movement in Malaysia: An Unsung (R)evolution* oleh Cecilia Ng, Maznah Mohamad & Tan Beng Hui
2. *The New Development Economics: After the Washington Consensus* disunting oleh Jomo K.S & Ben Fine
3. *Pengguna Dalam Pembangunan:* disunting oleh Nurizan Yahya, Mohd Amim Othman & Sharifah Azizah Haron
4. *The Origins of Development Economics: How Schools of Economic Thought Have Addressed Development.* disunting oleh Jomo K.S & Erik Reinert
5. *The Pioneers of Development Economics: Great Economists on Development.* disunting oleh Jomo.K.S.
6. *Teks Pengajian Tinggi Fajar Bakti: Kenegaraan Malaysia.* oleh Ruslan Zainuddin, Mohd Mahadee Ismail & Zaini Othman.
7. *Peranan Sains Sosial Di Malaysia.* disunting oleh Abdul Rahman Embong
8. *State-led Modernization and the New Middle Class in Malaysia.* Oleh Abdul Rahman Embong.

Gerai Buku

Enam buah syarikat penerbitan dari penerbit tempatan dan serantau terlibat dalam penjualan pelbagai buku terutama dalam bidang sains sosial. Antara penerbit yang terlibat dengan penjualan buku semasa MSC5 adalah Gerak Budaya, Penerbit UKM, Penerbit UM, Penerbit UPM, ISEAS Singapore dan Taylor & Francis Group. ISEAS misalnya mengaut keuntungan besar dalam MSC5 berbanding MSC sebelum ini.

