General

Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini Ujang shares sustainability practices and global academic world

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GAMBANG, 27 November 2025 – Academic figure and recipient of the National Engineering Icon Award 2025, Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini Ujang, met the Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA) community today in the 100 Days World Lecture Tour Sharing Session held in conjunction with the UMPSA Academic Advising System Empowerment Workshop.

The programme, held at Dewan Astaka, UMPSA Gambang Campus, gathered academics, top management, and students to hear his global experiences travelling across 15 countries within 100 days.

The Vice-Chancellor of UMPSA, Professor Dr Yatimah Alias, in her speech, expressed gratitude that the programme could be successfully organised and welcomed the presence of Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini, whom she described as an academic figure with extensive experience in higher education and national administration.

“Congratulations to Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini on being awarded the title of Professor Emeritus by Her Majesty the Raja Permaisuri Agong during the recent convocation ceremony at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM).

“The academic tour undertaken by Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini from 16 April to 26 July was aimed at sharing ideas on environmental sustainability, post-pandemic higher education transformation, climate change issues, and leadership for planetary health.

“Throughout the mission, Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini visited 15 countries including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and South Korea,” she said.

She added that Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini also delivered more than 40 lectures, met ten university presidents, visited more than 28 mosques, and produced more than 40 poems based on the places he visited throughout the journey.

“The academic tour of Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini is very significant because it elevates the culture of knowledge to the international level through lectures, forums, global dialogues, media, academic collaborations, and diverse perspectives on global issues, and the organisation of this programme aligns with the UMPSA Academic Advising System Empowerment Workshop.

“May the sharing session of Professor Emeritus Dato’ Seri Ir Dr Zaini inspire UMPSA lecturers and researchers to continue expanding their expertise and international networks.

“The role of academic advisors is increasingly challenging due to the growing number of students

and more complex student issues," she said.

She further added that insights from Professor Emeritus Dato' Seri Ir Dr Zaini, as an experienced academic figure, could help strengthen UMPSA's academic advising system more effectively.

Meanwhile, in the sharing session, Professor Emeritus Dato' Seri Ir Dr Zaini provided a comprehensive overview of his solo journey, explaining that each country visited had a tight schedule combining lectures, site visits, media interviews, and academic meetings.

"The journey was carried out using the concept of travel light and fast, bringing only minimal necessities to ease movement across continents.

"The sustainability and productivity practices of developed nations, including work systems in Scandinavia, are highly effective despite shorter working hours.

"In the Netherlands, the country's success in managing water has enabled it to become one of the largest agricultural exporters in the world despite its limited land area," he said.

During the sharing, he elaborated on several key themes of his lectures, such as Ecoshift, Ecosophy, leadership for planetary health, higher education in the post-normal ecosystem, and climate action towards 2050.

He also highlighted international changes in river cleanliness standards, now assessed through recreational suitability or "swimmability", rather than solely through chemical tests, as practised in France and the United States.

In addition, he urged the entire university community to continue building borderless knowledge networks, promoting lifelong learning, and embracing openness towards the global academic world.

Professor Emeritus Dato' Seri Ir Dr Zaini also stated that his lecture tour not only opened new collaboration opportunities but also strengthened Malaysia's recognition as an active nation in global discussions on environmental sustainability and higher education.

He also touched on the commitment of Qatar, Japan, and South Korea towards public health as a foundation for national excellence.

At the same time, he shared that a book documenting his entire journey is now being prepared for publication.

Professor Emeritus Dato' Seri Ir Dr Zaini hopes that the exposure gained will become a catalyst for UMPSA's excellence, in line with the university's aspiration to become one of the most advanced TVET institutions in the region.

Also present were the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International Affairs), Professor Dato' Ir. Ts. Dr Ahmad Ziad Sulaiman, the deans, and UMPSA lecturers.

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