Convocation

Artificial intelligence drives success of Khairul Imran Khalip, UMPSA Royal Education Award recipient 2025

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GAMBANG, 8 November 2025 – Perseverance and deep interest in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) made Khairul Imran Khalip, a Bachelor of Applied Data Analytics with Honours graduate of the Centre for Mathematical Sciences (PSM), Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA), one of the university's brightest stars when he was named recipient of the Royal Education Award (Pingat Jaya Cemerlang) 2025.

According to Khairul, his involvement in the field of AI began from a desire to understand how machines can imitate and interpret the ways humans think, speak, and feel.

"I want to develop models that are not only technically intelligent, but also capable of understanding human context.

"From there, I realised that AI is not merely technology, but a bridge to understand humans better," he said.

At UMPSA, he stood out as a student who combined academic excellence with high-impact research.

With a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.90, he completed his studies with outstanding performance in all semesters.

However, his greatest achievement came from his final-year project titled 'Sentiment Analysis of Noisy Malay Text using A Large Language Model'.

Through this project, he developed an open-source large language model (LLM) capable of understanding and analysing the sentiments of Malay-speaking social media users, including informal language styles that often challenge traditional computational processing.

According to Khairul Imran, the project allowed him to explore how technology can be adapted to local culture and language.

"I want to prove that AI should not be limited to major world languages.

"Malay also deserves representation in AI technology, and I am proud to contribute a small part towards that," he said.

The research was published in The 11th International Exchange and Innovation Conference on Engineering & Sciences (IEICES 2025) at Kyushu University, Japan, elevating UMPSA's name internationally.

The model he developed was uploaded to the HuggingFace platform and downloaded more than 2,000 times, demonstrating broad acceptance among global researchers.

He also took the initiative to develop a new dataset containing more than 33,000 Malay-language tweets categorised into positive and negative sentiments for AI model training purposes.

All processes of collection, cleaning, and labelling were conducted independently by him, showcasing his perseverance and strong research discipline.

This dataset is now used by other students and researchers in AI projects based on local languages.

Throughout his studies at UMPSA, Khairul was also active in bridging academia and industry.

He initiated the idea to invite the Chief Executive Officer of Mesolitica, the first Malaysian company to develop a Malay LLM, to deliver an industry lecture titled ‘Development of Malaysia AI: Generative AI, Nous & Malaysia Large Language Model’.

This effort expanded UMPSA students’ exposure to current AI developments and opened opportunities for strategic collaboration with local industry players.

During his Work-Based Learning (2u2i) training at Involve Asia, a technology company, he continued applying AI skills to real industry solutions.

He developed automation scripts using Google Apps Script and Airflow, wrote data-processing algorithms using Python, and created analytical dashboards that helped management make real-time data-driven decisions.

According to him, success is not solely the result of intelligence, but the product of continuous effort and a life principle rooted in Stoicism: focusing on what can be controlled, and striving to bring benefit to others.

“For me, AI is not just a tool to create intelligent systems, but a way to understand the world better and find solutions that bring value to humanity.

“I want to see more Malaysian students bravely explore AI in local languages and contexts.

“This technology belongs to everyone, and it is our responsibility to ensure it grows in line with our values and identity,” he said.

With exceptional academic achievements, high-impact research, and significant contributions to the growth of the local AI ecosystem, Khairul Imran truly embodies the spirit of innovation and excellence at UMPSA, making him a very deserving recipient of the Royal Education Award (Pingat Jaya Cemerlang).

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