General

Cyber X UMPSA team wins Astro-NACSA Coding Challenge 2024 (ANCC2024)

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PUTRAJAYA, 2 August 2024 – UMPSA's Cyber X team made Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA) proud by winning the Astro-NACSA Coding Challenge 2024 (ANCC2024).

Their success was celebrated by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who presented awards and prizes sponsored by international technology companies Blackberry-CompTIA, Cisco, and Huawei at the 2024 Cyber Security Summit, held at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre on July 30.

Before being crowned champions, the Cyber X UMPSA team was selected as one of the five finalists from a total of 251 entries.

The Cyber X UMPSA team was represented by three students from the Faculty of Computing (FK): Logathepan a/l Muniyappan, Yattish a/l Jaya Nanda Kumar, and Shatthiya Ganes a/l Sivakumaran.

The national-level competition, organized by the National Cyber Security Agency (NACSA) and Astro Malaysia Holdings Berhad, involved students from both public and private universities, aiming to foster awareness of and tackle cyber security threats.

Supported by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), ANCC2024 tasked participants with developing innovative mobile application software to detect and identify cybersecurity risks.

The winning teams displayed impressive creativity and technical expertise, effectively addressing Malaysia's critical digital security challenges.

The competition also aimed to promote safe digital practices in cyberspace. ANCC2024 plays a key role in raising awareness and producing the next generation of cybersecurity experts to defend the country from growing threats.

Logathepan a/l Muniyappan explained that he became interested in the competition after hearing about it from his lecturer during class.



“I teamed up with my two good friends, Shatthiya Ganes a/l Sivakumaran and Yattish a/l Jaya Nanda Kumar. We’ve known each other since studying for our Diploma of Computer Science at UMPSA in 2019.

"Shatthiya and Yattish are now Bachelor’s degree students in Software Engineering at UMPSA, while I am pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in Cyber Security."

"We decided to participate in this competition as the Cyber X team," he said.

According to Logathepan, Shatthiya and Yattish demonstrated excellent coding skills, while he focused on cybersecurity issues, case studies, APIs, and preparing presentation materials.

“To ensure our success, the first step was submitting our application with all the necessary files."

"We were shortlisted among the top five teams and invited to present in front of executives from NACSA, Astro, Blackberry, and other companies."

"Finally, we were announced as champions during the National Cyber Security Summit event," he said.

Logathepan expressed pride in their accomplishment: “This is a proud achievement and proves that the effort and cooperation we’ve put in have been worthwhile."

“It took us about a month to plan, organize the UI/UX, and implement the API."

"Dr. Nor Saradatul Akmar Zulkifli guided and supported us throughout the process and even attended the competition announcement event."

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank the lecturers who helped us, especially Dr. Nor Saradatul Akmar. Special appreciation also goes to Ts. Dr. Hoh Wei Siang, who helped us develop the idea, and Ts. Aziman Abdullah, who helped secure faculty sponsorship for our expenses to attend the event at PICC, Putrajaya," he added.

He also noted that their success motivated them to continue striving for further achievements.

“Although Cyber X consists of only three people, close cooperation and good communication, with each member playing their role well, were crucial to our success."

"Helping each other when needed was one of our key strategies for winning the competition."

He encouraged other students to pursue their dreams, saying, "Don't be afraid to try new things and always aim to improve yourself."

"Take the opportunity to participate in competitions and activities that can enhance your skills, and remember to cooperate and support each other," he said.

When asked about her role in supporting the students, Dr. Nor Saradatul Akmar explained that she served primarily as an advisor, guiding the team in planning and organizing the UI/UX design to meet the assessment and scoring criteria set by the competition organizers.

“I also helped refine their proposal papers before the final assessment, which was conducted online."

"The team's success is due to their commitment, team spirit, and refusal to give up, which they demonstrated throughout the competition."

"Their success also proves the high caliber of FK students, especially in computer programming,” she said.

According to Dr. Nor Saradatul, the Faculty of Computing and UMPSA provide various initiatives and encouragement for students to participate in both internal and external competitions.

“There was no registration fee for the Astro-NACSA Coding Challenge, allowing students to participate in the competition for free."

"However, the faculty offers indirect support by assigning lecturers as advisors to help students produce applications that meet the judging criteria, assisting them in further developing their ideas, and approving financial allocations for students to attend events like the closing ceremony at PICC,

Putrajaya."

"The faculty also provides hardware and software support as required by the competition," she said.

She expressed her hope that the positive feedback from Astro would lead to future collaboration between Cyber X, Astro, and NACSA to further develop the Cipherkey application beyond the prototype stage, benefiting the community by enhancing digital data security.

"I also hope more students, particularly from the Faculty of Computing, will step forward and participate in competitions at the faculty, university, national, or international level."

"I believe our students are highly capable, especially in competitions involving computer programming, such as coding challenges and hackathons."

"This success was achieved through hard work, persistence, and a strong team spirit," she added.

Dr. Nor Saradatul also expressed her appreciation for the Cyber X team's openness to receiving criticism and guidance.

"Thank you to the Cyber X team for trusting me as their advisor for this competition and for creating these meaningful memories."

"Thank you also to the faculty for their continuous support and for providing opportunities for students to participate in external competitions like this," she added.

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