A lake with lotus flowers in UTAR Perak Campus

History and Milestones

History and Milestones •

The Birth of a New Nation

Merdeka!" shouted YTM Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj ibni Almarhum Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah (1903-1990), just hours after becoming the first Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya. He paused for the crowd, more than 20,000, who packed the newly completed Merdeka Stadium on the morning of 31 August 1957, to join him, and continued "Merdeka!" for six more times proclaiming the country's independence from the British. Little did anyone know then that within five decades later two of the country's most popular institutions of higher education would be named after a prince and Malaysia's first Prime Minister (1957-1970), Tunku Abdul Rahman.
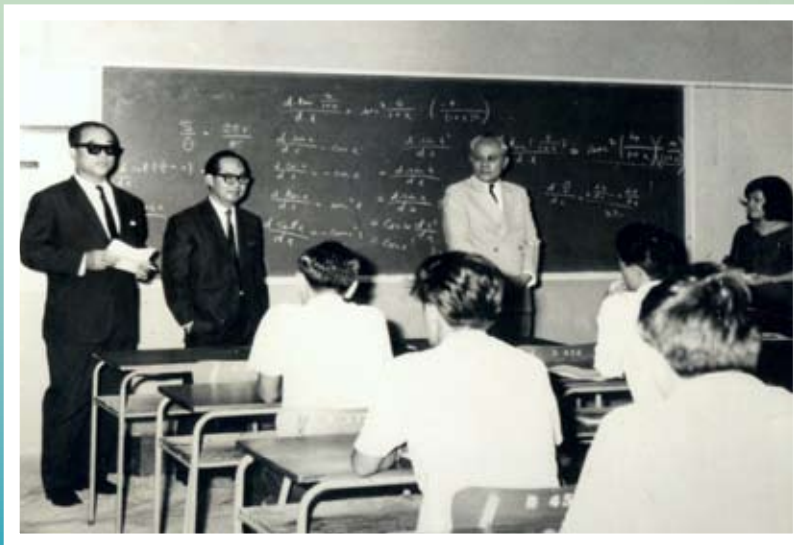

Tunku Abdul Rahman announcing the independence of Malaya on 31 August 1957 at the Merdeka Stadium

The Establishment of TAR College

Recognising the importance of education, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), in as early as 1964, mooted the idea of establishing a tertiary education institution, which later led to the birth of the first higher educational institution to be named after Malaysia's first Prime Minister – Tunku Abdul Rahman College (TAR College).

Established in 1969 with a pioneer batch of 764 students, TAR College today prides itself to be one of the largest colleges in Malaysia with a total enrolment of 25,000 students in its six campuses in Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Perak, Johor, Pahang and Sabah. Many of its 140,000 alumni hold key positions as professionals, corporate and national leaders.
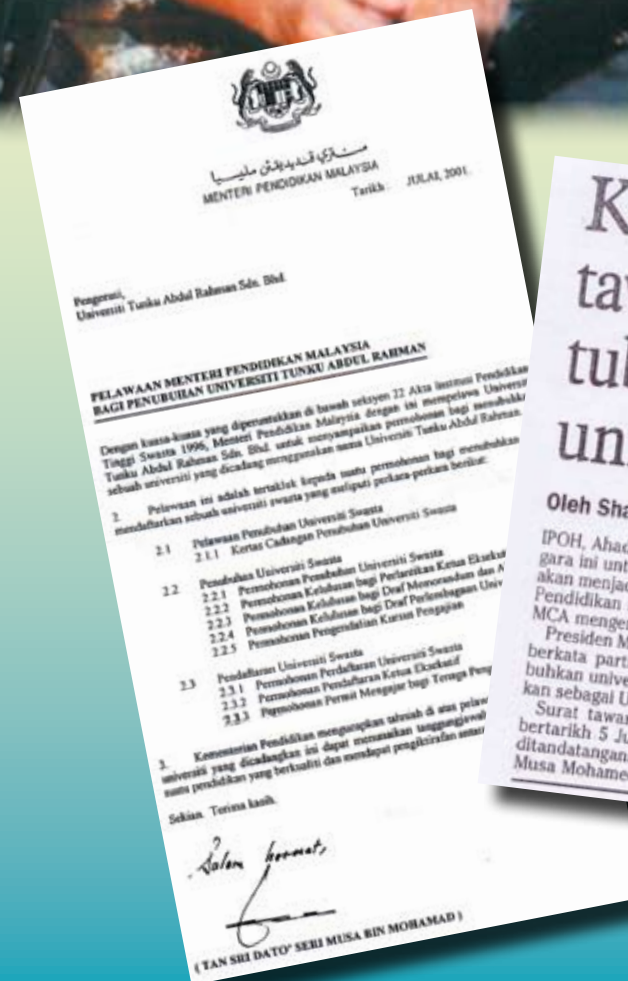
Dr Ling showing the offer letter from the Education Minister

The UTAR Journey Begins

The successful establishment of TAR College provided the impetus to the MCA to drive the dream to establish a university to complete the spectrum of education provision from pre-school to tertiary. After 32 years of establishing TAR College, the MCA then approached the Government to establish a new university and it was met with approval. On 5 July 2001, the then Minister of Education Tan Sri Musa Mohamad invited, in accordance with the Private Higher Education Institutions Act 1996, the MCA to establish a private university, which became Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

It was a historic moment for the MCA, when party president Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik announced that the Government had approved the setting-up of UTAR at the opening of the Perak MCA annual general meeting in Ipoh, a day after receiving the letter from the Minister of Education.

Berita Harian,
9 July 2001

" Malaysians have always placed great importance on education and it was through such drive and encouragement that enabled the realisation of a 33-year dream of the MCA — the establishment of UTAR in 2002."

UTAR Council Chairman Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik

UTAR Taking Shape

After receiving the green light to set up UTAR, MCA set the deadline to establish the University a year later in the middle of 2002. MCA's first task was to immediately form a steering committee for setting-up of UTAR.

The steering committee members comprised mainly TAR College Council members and TAR College senior staff. Tun Dr. Ling Liong Sik, who was also chairman of TAR College council, chaired the steering committee, with MCA Secretary-General Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh as deputy chairman.

Soon after, a working committee chaired by TAR College Principal Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng Lay Swee was formed to formulate the blueprint and framework of the new university.

Tun Dr Ling later became the Council Chairman of the University and Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng, the first President and CEO.

UTAR First President

Founding President/CEO
YBhg Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng Lay Swee

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng Lay Swee had wisely used her leadership ability, expertise and experience to build UTAR from scratch and nurture UTAR from offering only eight honours bachelor's programmes and the first intake of 411 students in 2002 to 60 programmes including 10 Master's and four PhD, and 16,572 students in 2008 when she retired from UTAR.

Over the six years, the University convocated 9,145 bachelor's and six master's graduates. Since the inaugural convocation in 2005, UTAR graduate employability has been exceeding 97 percent within six months of graduation. During her tenure at the University, she had led UTAR to be recognised by LAN (now MQA), the society and the industry as an excellent teaching university, making UTAR a household name.

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng retired from UTAR on 31 March 2008. On 19 April 2008, she was conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Education by the University in recognition of her contributions.

Reflections by the Founding President of UTAR

I had studied and held various posts in many universities in the world, but I never dreamed that I would ever be called upon to set up a brand new university. Such a rare honour was bestowed upon me in December 2001 by MCA and the Council Chairman of UTAR, Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik. It was the most challenging responsibility in my life. I accepted this undertaking relying not merely on my own track record, but also on the divine enablement of God, the visionary leadership and driving force of Tun Dr. Ling Liong Sik, and the co-operation of all the parties concerned, especially my dedicated staff, the Government and the community.

Ten years have passed since the establishment of UTAR but I can still recall vividly the exciting development of UTAR phase by phase. UTAR occupied the last six years of my working life, part of which overlapped with my service in Tunku Abdul Rahman College (KTAR). We did a lot of research to learn from renowned universities what could be adapted for UTAR and to make the UTAR system most suited to the expectations and yet be affordable to provide more opportunities for further studies. I cherished those pre-retirement memories because UTAR took the most out of me but it also rewarded me the most. I had to pray for UTAR more than anyone else, forego much rest and sleep and work harder than ever before. Nevertheless, I can honestly say that all those sacrifices were gratifying because they had produced the desired result.

By the time I left, UTAR was already standing on a solid foundation both academically and financially for future success. A full-fledged university offering quality tertiary education at an affordable fee has thus come into reality and is here to stay. UTAR is contributing significantly to the human resource capital for the fulfillment of Wawasan 2020.

Although I have retired from UTAR, UTAR is still dear to my heart. It is indeed heartening to note that my successor, Ir Professor Academician Dato' Dr Chuah Hean Teik has upheld the noble vision of offering quality higher education affordable to Malaysian youth, and is leading UTAR to greater heights. Under his able leadership, R&D and commercialisation as well as collaborative and internationalisation activities have been stepped up significantly to bring UTAR closer to achieving its vision of becoming a premier University.

UTAR, Selamat Ulang Tahun Kesepuluh!

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng Lay Swee
7 December 2011

Quality Education for All

With the establishment of the steering and working committees, MCA was poised to accomplish what it set out to do – establish UTAR to offer quality education to all.

As a private university registered under the Private Higher Education Institutions Act 1996, UTAR was open to all races and would be based on meritocracy – good academic performance.

UTAR aimed to be a university for the people; one that is affordable to all. To maintain its fees at a reasonable level, it was decided that UTAR would be a not-for-profit institution wholly owned by UTAR Education Foundation. This was in line with the aspirations of MCA to make UTAR a university for the people.

Entry into Utar will be on merit

University open to all races, says PM

ELIGIBILITY to enrol in Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) will be based on qualifications as there will be no quota, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"It is open to all races but they must have the qualifications to enter. If they are not qualified, we cannot blame the MCA or the Chinese community. They open the university to all races. There is no

eral Assembly at Wisma MCA in Kuala Lumpur.

He was commenting on the assurance given by MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik that students from all races would be able to seek places in the university.

Asked whether there was a proposal to make Utar a public university, Dr Mahathir said if there was a suggestion, the matter would

opening of the assembly, Dr Mahathir said the Government agree to the setting up of Utar in the belief that it would not be exclusive for the Chinese.

"Other races will also have access," he said.

Dr Mahathir was also asked about the decreasing Chinese population and if it would reduce the MCA's importance.

He said it was the percentage

Formation of the International Adivsory Council

To ensure UTAR would have international standing as promised, The UTAR International Advisory Council (IAC) was set up, comprising members comprised eminent academicians and scholars to guide and facilitate internationalisation of the University.

The UTAR steering committee first approached the renowned scholar Professor Dato' Dr Wang Gungwu, then director (now chairman) of East Asia Institute at National University of Singapore, who was also former vice-chancellor of the University of Hong Kong (1986-1995).

Tun Dr Ling announced on 10 April 2002 that the nine-member IAC would be headed by Professor Wang. The eminent members were:

- Professor Dr Lee Yuan Tseh
- Professor Dr Charles K Kao
- Professor Dr Tu Weiming
- Professor Dr Yang Fujia
- Lord Ernest Ronald Oxburgh
- Professor Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ghauth Jasmon
- YBhg Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr Lam Sai Kit
- YBhg Academician Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Datuk Dr Augustine Ong Soon Hock

The inaugural IAC meeting

国际学术咨询委员满意拉曼大学定位

马华总会长拿督斯里林良实医生透露，拉曼大学国际学术咨询委员会很满意拉曼大学一开始就有了正确的定位。拉曼大学国际学术咨询委员会现在共有9名成员，而出席首次会议的有王赓武，杨福家，高锟教授，高夫博士及丹斯里王顺福博士。这5名国际知名学者和拉曼大学建校委员会成员今日在会上达成共识，拉曼大学必须为下一代而设，此为拉曼大学最大的责任。

16 April 2002 NANYANG SIANG PAU

Eight courses to start wtih

In March 2002, the University announced that it would be offering eight degree courses for its first intake of students for academic year 2002/03 beginning May at its temporary campus in Petaling Jaya:

- Faculty of Accountancy and Management offering:
  - o Bachelor of Accounting (Hons)
  - o Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons)
- Faculty of Arts and Social Science offering:
  - o Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Chinese Studies
  - o Bachelor of Communication (Hons) Journalism
  - o Bachelor of Communication (Hons) Public Relations
- Faculty of Information and Communication Technology offering:
  - o Bachelor of Computer Science (Hons)
  - o Bachelor of Information Systems (Hons) Business Information Systems
  - o Bachelor of Information Systems (Hons) Information Systems Engineering

A humble yet momentous beginning

UTAR made its first ever student recruitment drive through advertisements and announcements in various newspapers in March 2002. The response was overwhelming.

On 10 June 2002, UTAR welcomed its first intake of 411 students to its temporary campus at The Star's old premises at 13, Jalan 13/6, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.

The launch of UTAR

After receiving the first batch of students at the temporary campus in Petaling Jaya, the University planned for the next historic moment – the official launch of UTAR - which was officiated by the fourth Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad on 13 August 2002 at Dewan Utama of Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur.

From the album of UTAR's Launch

anticipating . . .

From left: Datuk Dr Ng, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah, Dato Seri Dr Mahathir, Dato' Seri Dr Ling & Prof Wang Gungwu.

Fireworks & coloured confetti raining on the stage ...

here it comes . . .

The Prime Minister and his wife next to UTAR's logo.

it is official . . .

The Prime Minister sealed the launching ceremony by signing on the plaque.

the first VIP lecture . . .

The Prime Minister delivering his Inaugural Lecture.

and

finally, Negara-ku . . .

UTAR is born!!!

The assembly standing for the National Anthem.

The UTAR Building Fund

As the fulfilling journey to establish UTAR progressed to its next milestone of building its main campus, it was a heavy burden and laborious task of raising every single cent for the UTAR building fund. But as a single spark can start a prairie fire, history attests that the initial burning enthusiasm of the UTAR pioneering group and MCA to establish the University of the people soon spread like wildfires influencing and reaching the hearts of many who wanted to do their part for the meaningful noble cause. Donations poured in from wealthy philanthropists, corporations, organisations, and federal and state governments, to the people on the streets. As every cent of it was from the people, it made UTAR – a university by the people.

Contributions collected in various ways and from all quarters

Here are just some of the many news clips about the enormous support received for the establishment of UTAR.

Govt to give RM50mil to Utar

MCA says thanks at 54th anniversary celebration

JOHOR BARU: The Government has agreed to allocate RM50mil to the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) building fund.

helping the Government to develop the full potential of all young Malaysians to serve the nation's needs and demands in develop-

The Sun / Friday / April 5, 2002 • 9

NationalNews

Site in Kampar offered to Utar promoters

IPOH, Thurs: Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali said that the

replying to Chew Wai Khoon (BN-Tebing Tinggi) at the state legislative assembly today.

BERITA HARIAN 19 NO

Perak, Johor tawar tanah kampus Utar

KUALA LUMPUR, Ahad — Perak dan Johor mengemukakan tawaran terbaik untuk menyediakan tanah untuk penubuhan kampus Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar), kata Setiausaha Agung MCA, Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh.

Beliau berkata, Menteri

Besar kedua-dua negeri itu datang sendiri kepada MCA untuk membuat tawaran mereka yang dianggap men...

Dr Ti

Perak allocates 400ha for Utar campus project

IPOH, Sun. — Perak has allocated another 400ha site in Kampar for the setting up of the Universiti Tunku Ab...

捐拉曼大学万元

印度人前进阵线爱华教不落后

Indian community donates to Utar

Fund-raising gets support

RM150,000 pledge for Utar construction

KUALA LUMPUR: Oyster sauce manufacturer Lee Kum Kee has pledged to donate RM50,000 and proceeds from its One Million Bottle consumer campaign to the construction of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar).

SUPPORT UTAR

FEDERATION OF TARC ALUMNI ASSOCS MEDIA CONFERENCE UTAR FUNDRAISING DINNER

要爲拉曼大學籌百萬元

Cabbies on Utar fund-raising drive

IPOH: Taxi drivers in the Kinta Valley are doing their bit to raise funds for the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) campus in Kampar.

Cultural show to raise funds

Hawker fare for Utar fund

Walkathon in Rawang nets RM10,000 for Utar

Choir to raise funds for Utar

Marathon to raise funds for Uta

JOHOR BARU: A stairs-climbing marathon up 35 floors of the Menara Landmark building will be held next month to raise funds for Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

The event, to be held on May 1 and organised by the Pulai MCA Wanita and Youth wings,

would require participants to climb to the top floor or some 900 steps in the building here.

Event spokesman Stanley Tan said those who completed the run would be awarded a certificate.

KL Fashion Week 2003 to raise funds for UTAR

Charity golf raises RM3.8mil for Utar

Songstress raises RM500,000 for Utar

The Groundbreaking Ceremony at Perak Campus in Kampar

A groundbreaking ceremony was held at UTAR Perak campus in Kampar on 12 January 2003. The historic event was officiated by Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad and witnessed by 30,000 people including local and foreign guests.

Reflections by YABhg Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad
Fourth Prime Minister of Malaysia

Saya ingin mengucapkan tahniah kepada Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman yang menyambut hari ulangtahunnya yang ke 10.

Saya juga merasakan bahawa saya agak beruntung di kalangan orang lain kerana berpeluang bersama-sama melalui beberapa peristiwa bersejarah yang dilakarkan oleh UTAR. Sepuluh tahun yang lalu saya telah dijemput untuk merasmikan Universiti ini di Kuala Lumpur. Enam bulan selepas itu saya berpeluang merasmikan upacara pecah tanah kampus UTAR di Kampar, Perak. Pada tahun 2005 saya menjadi tetamu di konvokesyen UTAR yang julung kalinya dan saya telah dianugerahkan Ijazah Doktor Kehormat Sains.

Kisah UTAR mencerminkan kesungguhan dan kegigihan semua rakyat Malaysia yang patriotic yang mahukan kejayaan. Sejak kemerdekaan misi Negara adalah untuk mencapai wawasan perintis kemerdekaan yang mahu memberi peluang mendapatkan pelajaran untuk semua dan bersama-sama membina Negara untuk masa depan yang lebih gemilang. Dengan misi yang sama, perintis-perintis UTAR telah bersungguh-sungguh berusaha untuk menubuhkan universiti walaupun tidak sampai setahun setelah mendapat kelulusan dari Kerajaan. Semasa upacara pecah tanah saya telah disambut oleh 30,000 hadirin yang berdiri di dalam panas terik dan sanggup berjalan beberapa kilometer untuk datang ke upacara tersebut. Kemudian perintis-perintis UTAR telah sekali lagi berusaha tanpa mengenal penat lelah dan akhirnya berjaya mengumpulkan RM200 juta dari kalangan ahli masyarakat yang berkongsi wawasan UTAR untuk membina fasa pertama Kampus UTAR di Perak. Dan sebelum fasa pertama ini siap, UTAR telah melahirkan graduan-graduan sulungnya. Sekarang, setelah berjaya melahirkan lebih 25,000 graduan, UTAR diiktiraf sebagai antara university yang ulung di Malaysia.

Negara kita telah amat berjaya mengurangkan kadar kemiskinan, meningkatkan kadar literasi dan taraf kehidupan. Di dalam dunia yang begitu kompetitif cabaran yang dihadapi ialah mengekalkan daya saing Malaysia di dalam ekonomi global. Dengan itu, lebih dari dahulu, kesungguhan untuk berjaya dan keupayaan dinamik yang diperlihatkan oleh masyarakat UTAR seharusnya ditauladani oleh rakyat Malaysia keseluruhannya untuk tujuan pembangunan Negara dan meningkatkan daya saing kita di peringkat antarabangsa. Saya amat sedar betapa sukar merubah minda dan sikap seseorang individu untuk mencapai anjakan paradigma yang diperlukan untuk maju. Seperti yang saya katakan semasa perasmian UTAR di Kuala Lumpur, saya amat menyedari hakikat kata-kata bijak pandai bahawa "kita boleh membawa seekor kuda kepada air tetapi kita tidak boleh memaksanya minum." Namun, untuk Malaysia yang lebih makmur di masa hadapan, kita mesti membawa kuda itu kepada air. Jika tidak, ia sudah pasti tidak akan minum.

Sekali lagi, saya ingin mengucapkan tahniah kepada UTAR yang mencapai ulangtahun ke 10. Saya yakin UTAR akan mempunyai lebih banyak dekad mendatang yang dipenuhi dengan kejayaan. Kekalkan kesungguhan untuk berjaya dan sikap dinamik untuk terus berkeupayaan untuk menyumbang kepada kemajuan masyarakat dan negara.

Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad
9 Disember 2011

UPACARA MEMULAKAN KERJA PEMBINAAN UTAR
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
拉曼大学动工仪式
DIRASMIKAN BERSAMA OLEH
Y.A.B. DATO' SERI DI RAJA MOHAMAD TAJOL ROSLI BIN TAN SRI MOHD. GHAZALI
(MENTERI BESAR PERAK DARUL RIDZUAN)
Y.B. DATO' SERI ONG KA TING (PRESIDEN MCA)
Y.B. DATO' SERI DR. LING LIONG SIK (PENGERUSI MAJLIS UTAR)
29 NOVEMBER 2003

The Piling Ceremony

On 29 November 2003, a piling ceremony was held to officially mark the start of the Phase 1A of construction of the 1,300-acre UTAR Perak Campus in Kampar.

The Handing Over of Perak Campus

Exactly four years later on 12 January 2007, it was a cause for yet another celebration – the official handing over of the newly completed campus by the contractors of the University.

The Opening of Perak Campus

UTAR had a new beginning when its Perak Campus opened its doors to the first batch of 500 Foundation programme students on 1 June 2007, five years after the University's inception.

UTAR Current President

President/CEO
YBhg Ir Professor Academician Dato'
Dr Chuah Hean Teik

Ir Professor Academician Dato' Dr Chuah Hean Teik took on as president and chief executive officer of UTAR on 1 April 2008. He has 20 years of experience in higher education. He started his career in July 1988 in the University of Malaya, where he acquired his Bachelor of Engineering (first-class honours), Master of Engineering Science and PhD. Professor Chuah joined Multimedia University in May 2007 and rose to the positions of Senior Professor and Vice President (R&D and Academic Development) before he took on the appointment as UTAR President.

Today, under Professor Chuah's helmsmanship, the number of programmes has increased to 109 including 23 Master's and 11 PhD programmes. Student population has grown to more than 19,000 and that of alumni to more than 25,000, which include PhD graduates. The sizable numbers of students and graduates clearly indicate the popularity of UTAR among the students and parents. The high graduate employability of exceeding 97 percent which UTAR sustains over the years clearly attests to the quality and relevancy of UTAR courses to the market and industry.

The Major Milestones

- Received approval from Ministry of Education to establish the University.

- Appointed Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik as UTAR Council Chairman and Tan Sri Datuk Dr Ng Lay Swee as UTAR President.

- Held the Inaugural International Advisory (IAC) meeting, which was chaired by UTAR Council Chairman.

- Began with the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Faculty of Accountancy and Management, and Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, offering eight honours degree programmes in Petaling Jaya Campus.

- Welcomed 411 pioneer students.

- Launched the university officially, which was officiated by the fourth Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad at Kolej Tunku Abdul Rahman.

- Established the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Kuala Lumpur Campus in Setapak.

- Became a Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) Status Institution.

- Received the first LAN Accreditation for the initial eight honours degree programmes.

- Established the Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research.

- Received MOSTI ScienceFund from Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia.

- Offered over 50 programmes from Foundation to Postgraduate degree programmes.

2002

2004

2006

2003

2005

- Established the Centre for Extension Education.

- Held the Groundbreaking Ceremony at Perak Campus Site in Kampar.

- Held the Piling Ceremony to mark the start of the construction of Phase 1A of Perak Campus.

- Established Sungai Long Campus and the Centre for Foundation Studies.

- Launched Foundation, Lifelong Learning and Part-Time degree programmes .

- Held the inaugural Convocation for 2,083 graduands.

- Launched the Master's Degree programmes.

- Received "Private University with Excellence in Increasing Student Enrolment for 2003-2005" Award from the Ministry of Higher Education.

- Established the Institute of Chinese Studies.

- Received approval from Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) to offer MBBS and signed an MoU with MOHE to use government hospitals and clinics as teaching and training facilities.

- Launched UTAR Entrepeneurship and Commercialisation Plan.

- Admitted the pioneer batch of medical students at Sungai Long Campus.

- Received ISO 9001 Quality Management. System certification.

- Established the Faculty of Creative Industries and the Faculty of Buisness and Finance.

- Awarded postgraduate degrees to the first batch of five Master's students at the March 2008 Convocation.

- Appointed Ir. Professor Dato' Dr Chuah Hean Teik as the new UTAR President.

- Received Mimos Award for establishing the Centre of Excellence in Pattern Recognition and Machine Vision.

2008

2010

2012

2007

2009

2011

- Launched PhD programmes.

- Completed Phase 1A of UTAR Perak Campus and began the construction of Phase 1B of the campus.

- Opened UTAR Perak Campus for initial admission of 500 students.

- Held the inaugural Malaysia Festival of the Mind at UTAR Petaling Jaya Campus, which was officiated by the fifth Prime Minister of Malaysia Tun Abdullah Bin Haji Ahmad Badawi.

- Established the Faculty of Science (FSc) and the Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology (FEGT).

- Introduced the UTAR Soft Skills Development Certificate (USSDC) programmes.

- Established the first professorial chair and UTAR Global Research Network.

- Launched the UTAR New Village Community Project.

- Bought over the 10-storey Sungai Long Campus building from the developer.

- Completed Phase One and began Phase Two of Perak Campus construction.

- Established the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

- Awarded the first PhD.

- Received and opened OSK Investment Bank Computer Lab at Kuala Lumpur Campus in Setapak.

- Listed as a recognised University by the Ministry of Education, China.

- Admitted the first batch of 25 students sponsored by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to UTAR Bachelor of Arts (Hons) English Education programme.

- As at December 2011, UTAR offers over 108 programmes (from foundation to PhD level) to over 19,000 students at four campus locations and has nurtured over 25,000 graduates.