

## **UTM and Thai Varsity celebrates 10 years of successful collaboration through the 10<sup>th</sup> MSU-UTM Joint Workshop on Urban Design and Conservation**

In line with Universiti Teknologi Malaysia's (UTM) efforts in internationalising and striving for research and teaching excellence at the global scale, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (JPBW), Faculty of Built Environment (FAB), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru (UTMJJB), jointly with Mahasarakham University's (MSU) Faculty of Architecture, Urban Design and Creative Arts (FAUDCA), successfully organised the *10<sup>th</sup> MSU-UTM Joint Workshop on Urban Design and Conservation (10<sup>th</sup> MSU-UTM JWUDC)* on 05-13 April 2015.

The inaugural MSU-UTM JWUDC was organised in 2006 and the Joint Workshop has since become a flagship academic activity under the *MSU-UTM Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)*. UTM and MSU play alternate host to the joint workshop run annually in the respective host country; with the 9<sup>th</sup> Joint Workshop being held in Thailand in 2014 and this 10<sup>th</sup> Workshop in Malaysia.

A key component of the 10<sup>th</sup> MSU-UTM JWUDC was a seven-day field trip, with technical briefings and heritage/town trails, to George Town, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Melaka and Nusajaya. Seventeen MSU students from diverse backgrounds of architecture, urban design, interior design and fine arts, and 12 UTM students from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning (SBEP) program participated in the workshop, led by a JPBW lecturer, 2 MSU lecturers and 2 FAB post-graduate students.

To enhance intellectual and cultural exchange between the Thai and Malaysian students, the Joint Workshop incorporated an urban design project in Kuala Lumpur's Pasar Seni-Medan Pasar area, where the conducted detailed observations and urban design analysis and proposed design solutions to improve the area into a sustainable, liveable and vibrant urban place depicting the area's historical and functional significance. The Joint Workshop concluded with a successful Final Presentation on Urban Design of the Pasar Seni-Medan Pasar Area in UTMJJB on 13 April 2015.

Building on the highly successful joint workshops in the past 10 years, a 'MSU-UTM JWUDC Strategic Positioning Meeting for 2016 and Beyond' was held on 12 April 2015 to explore future strategic and higher-impact academic collaborations that would benefit both faculties of UTM and MSU. A high-level 3-member delegation from MSU's FAUDCA led by the Dean, Assistant Professor Dr. Tarawut Boonlua made a courtesy call to FAB and was received by the FAB Dean, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Roslan Amirudin and seven other senior faculty members.

The meeting identified a series of strategic programs for priority implementation involving students and academic staff of the two faculties, including:

1. Student exchange programs through UTM's Global Outreach Program (GOP);
2. Participation of MSU academic staff in the *13<sup>th</sup> Asian Planning Schools Association Congress (APSA 2015)* in UTM in August 2015;
3. Joint publication activities with MSU academic staff to be appointed to the international editorial board of UTM's *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability (IJBES)*;
4. Sabbatical arrangements for academic staff exchange (short-term teaching and research attachments);

5. Joint study/research on measured drawings of Malaysian and Thai vernacular architecture to be led by FAB's *Centre of Excellence for the Study of Built Environment in the Malay World (KALAM)*; and
6. Organisation of the *International Conference on Design and Sustainable Development 2016 (ICDSD 2016)* by MSU, UTM and the National University of Laos in July 2016.



Group photo session at Dataran Putra after field observation and technical briefing in Putrajaya



Historic moment.... Faculty members from UTM's FAB and MSU's Faculty of Architecture, Urban Design and Creative Arts pose for the record. Standing sixth from left is FAB Dean, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Roslan Amirudin, fifth from left is MSU's FAUDCA Dean, Assistant Prof. Dr. Tarawut Boonlua.



UTM and MSU students presenting design outcomes of the intensive urban design workshop in KL's Pasar Seni-Medan Pasar Area