Celebrating Pakistan Day

Students, lecturers and guest join High Commissioner in eventful celebration

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JOHOR BARU: The Pakistani community of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) in Skudai Campus here took a day off from their busy schedule to celebrate Pakistan Day.

About 250 students and lecturers at the university, their families and Malaysian guests took part in the event to honour the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Most of the men, women and children came dressed in shalwar kameez – their national dress with some of the men wearing Jinnah cap or karakul and traditional pashmina shawls.

Joining them were the Pakistan High Commissioner to Malaysia Masood Khaled and UTM deputy vice-chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Tajuddin Ninggal.

The event started with the flag raising ceremony led by Masood and singing of the Pakistan national anthem in front of Bangunan Canseleri Sultan Ibrahim at about 11.30am.

After the flag raising ceremony, guests proceeded to Dewan Sultan Iskandar just metres away and were treated to the patriotic song performances by the children and a pantomime.

In his welcoming speech Dr Mohd Tajuddin said UTM was the first Malaysian university to celebrate Pakistan Day and hoped it would be an annual event for the Pakistani community here.

“We have 231 Pakistanis doing their Masters and PhD in the fields of engineering at UTM now, and they are a part of 4,500 international students from 60 countries.

Dr Mohd Tajuddin said there were also 18 lecturers and professors from Pakistan at the university currently, the highest number of Pakistani teaching staff in any public and private universities in the country.

Masood said 3,500 Pakistanis were pursuing their studies at universities in Malaysia from 2,500, as recorded in 2010.

“The numbers are expected to increase in the coming years as most Pakistanis find furthering their studies in Malaysia is more affordable than going to Europe or USA,” he said.
Showing respect: Masoos Khaled (left in suit) at the flag raising ceremony to mark the Pakistan Day at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Skudai Campus in Johor Baru.

Greetings: Mohd Tajuddin (in suit) being greeted by children at the Pakistan Day celebration. Accompanying him is President of International Student Society Pakistan UTM president Muhammad Tahir (left).