

Zeti Akhtar Aziz: Nurturing young talent in Malaysia

Speech by Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz, Governor of the Central Bank of Malaysia (Bank Negara Malaysia), at the Kijang Emas Scholarship Award Ceremony for High Achievers, Kuala Lumpur, 6 May 2014.

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While the global economy continues to face uncertainties and significant challenges, the Malaysian economy has every potential to remain on a steady growth trajectory and move up the value chain. This is however only achievable if we can nurture the required talents. Talent development strategies and implementation is therefore one of the key priorities of the nation. We need to invest in our talent pipeline

The Kijang Emas Scholarship Award is an eminent scholarship award reflecting the Bank's commitment in creating a sustainable talent pool for the nation. The Kijang Emas scholarship is distinct from the Kijang scholarship whereby the recipients are given the freedom to pursue any field of study at top-notch universities in any country of their choice. The Bank also does not impose any bond on the recipient except that they return, contribute and take part in the progress and development of our beloved nation.

To date, 42 high potential talent have been awarded the Kijang Emas scholarship. The recipients are currently pursuing their studies in diverse field of studies including Medicine, Dentistry, Genetics, Biochemistry, Dietetics, Physics, Engineering, Law, Psychology and Architecture in top universities around the world such as M.I.T., University of Pennsylvania and the University of Cambridge. Thus far, 6 Kijang Emas scholars have completed their studies and have returned to serve the nation, while another 7 of them are expected to complete their studies in the next six months.

For the 2014 Kijang Emas scholarship, we received a total of 331 applications, representing 82% of the 405 straight A+ students in the country. From this, the Bank had shortlisted 26 students based on their SPM results and also their level of involvement in co-curricular and sports activities. The students then underwent a rigorous evaluation process under the Bank's "Kijang Academy" assessing their technical and leadership competencies, as well as their values.

We are pleased to award 3 outstanding students the Kijang Emas Scholarship this year. Having just completed their SPM, Justin and Nurizati will be enrolled into the pre-university programme, whilst Alicia will be pursuing her undergraduate studies.

Alicia has successfully obtained a conditional offer to study for the BA degree in Law at the prestigious University of Cambridge. Following their pre-university programme, Justin aspires to be a doctor and Nurizati is keen to read dietetics. I am confident that all of you will do your best and will contribute to the future of our nation.

In addition to the Kijang Emas scholarship award, every year the Bank also awards scholarships to about 40 high achieving SPM students for them to pursue their undergraduate studies abroad with the objective of them being part of the Bank's future talent pool. The Bank has put in place a structured, holistic and collaborative Scholars' Development Programme to support all of our scholars throughout their studies. The programme aims to develop high-quality and well-rounded scholars with leadership qualities that will be the next generation of young talent who will be the leaders of tomorrow for the Bank and our nation.

With regard to the achievement of our scholars enrolled in top university, I am glad to share with you that this year 3 of our scholarship holders will be entering the University of Pennsylvania to pursue their undergraduate studies in Economics and Finance, 1 scholar to pursue Engineering at the University of Cambridge and another scholar to pursue Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Oxford. We wish all our scholars the best and to make the Bank proud of your excellence.