

Anwar Fazal



The Birth and Rise of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) - Some Ruminations

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Dewan Tuanku Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM))

This is a broad sweep of the story of the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in multiverse Penang. It shares the unusual institutions and individuals that made Penang an intellectual hub and how this new unique institution sprouted out to be a centre of excellence and innovation in higher education in Malaysia and globally. I share my own journey with USM and some of the unusual stories and initiatives that I was associated with. I add my own thoughts on what made USM a shining star both locally and globally.

A Place called Penang

The Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) could not have chosen a more special place to be located- Penang.

Unique Penang is like laksa, rojak, and pasembor, many ingredients, unusual flavours, tangy, and a lasting and an unforgettable treat. Penang's history as a port open to the whole world gave it a globalness. Penang's people and its places are rooted in multiple diversities and celebrated as one of the cosmopolitan wonders of the world as a UNESCO Heritage Site based on its outstanding universal values. Certainly, Penang has a special combination of soil, soul, and society. Over 200 years ago, it was already being acknowledged and celebrated. I share four stories that illustrate this:

1. A colonial Governor of Penang, Sir George Leith, in 1804, said he has never in his whole life seen a community of more colours, creeds, cultures, and languages.
2. One of the earliest entries in the renowned Encyclopaedia Britannica in 1817 actually had two pages on what then was called "Prince of Wales Island" and described its many vibrant activities.

3. A leading travel writer, Isabella Bird, called this place “a brilliant place under a brilliant sky”.
4. The first “free school”, i.e. open to students of all religions, a very unique initiative in the whole region, was established on this island in 1816 -The Penang Free School (PFS).

The Beginnings

To understand USM, we must not forget its history. The past is easily forgotten if not recorded and shared if we are to feel part of the soil, the soul, and society. Facts and stories, people and places, great moments and even tragedies, like May 13 1969 must be remembered and learnt from. It was coincidentally in that year, in 1969, that this institution of higher learning began its operation. It was a wonderful gift of hope and a beacon of the future that we needed so during those very turbulent times.

The founding story of USM is exciting, challenging and celebratory as is the story of our nation. This place called Penang was once owned by the State of Kedah and later became a British colony. Just across this campus is Batu Uban, where a community already existed before the island was colonised by the British. This larger area became a great plantation of spices and was owned by two of the wealthiest British families called the Scott's, and later, the Browns. It then became a major military camp for the British, first called the “Gelugor Barracks” and later changed, in 1953, to “Minden Barracks” by a British regiment that had, in 1780, won a battle at the city of Minden in Germany. The British named a place in Malaysia after a place in Germany! That's Penang for you.

My own links with this place began even before USM was established in the late 50s. I used to play cricket and rugby on the grounds when my school, PFS, took on the British Military in those games. It was hard to beat them especially in rugby. Two other stories:

1. My dear friend, one of the greatest activists and poets in the third world, Cecil Rajendra, lived in his stepfather's quarters in the barracks. His stepfather was working as a clerk with the British Army.
2. All four of my sisters were deeply connected to USM. Jamilah, was among the first batch of students and also the Secretary of the inaugural Students' Council. Faridah, also graduated from USM and has just retired as headmistress of Convent Pulau Tikus School. Rashidah Begum, was employed by the university and recently retired as Chief Librarian. Asghari, a teacher, was among the early “senior citizen” students to do her science degree in the pioneering part-time distance learning programme, for which she is ever grateful.

Some Early "Institutions" of Higher Learning in Penang

People often think of USM as Penang's first institution of higher learning in Penang. It is more complicated and I like to share five interesting stories of special individuals and institutions prior to USM that were in their own unique ways "institutions" of higher learning :

1. The first story is that of the "College General", founded in 1808 in Penang by the Vatican, Rome, to develop Roman Catholic priests in a formal educational setting for this whole region. It was located where Gurney Paragon is now, between Kelawei Road and Gurney Drive. Only the Chapel now remains to remind us of its legacy and, thankfully, it is well restored and used for public events. There was a campaign to preserve the whole College but it did not succeed. The College itself moved to Tanjung Bungah.

2. The second story is that of James Richardson Logan (1819-1869), a Scottish lawyer and advocate of the civil rights of the local people, outstanding environmentalist, and most of all, a scholar of distinction of a rare kind. He founded, edited, and wrote in the Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia. It had 27 volumes that even included research on the ethnological history of what he called the "Malay" region. He also extracted from the 27 volumes and did eight volumes on "The Language and Ethnology of the Indian Archipelago", all out of Penang. Interestingly, his work was described as the first statements that, I quote, "dignified the Malay (or more popularly, the Nusantara) by indicating to them the proud position among most ancient and civilised races of the Earth". It was great that USM later set up the pioneering Archaeological Centre, one of USM's greatest assets, which rapidly became among the leaders in the region, in the world, and even finding great things today. Logan is also credited with coining the term "Indonesia". He has a monument opposite the Penang courthouse on Leith Street and next to Dewan Sri Pinang. There is also an annual public lecture organised by the Penang Bar Council in his name and I had the privilege to do the inaugural lecture on the topic of "Civic Activism in Penang".

3. Some 50 years after Logan passed away, there was born in Penang a great Malaysian medical legend, Dr. Wu Lien-Teh (1879-1960). He saved China from extinction through brilliant research and excellence action measures, in the early part of the last century. A horrific pneumonic plague was killing thousands of people. He was a world leading scholar on communicable diseases, nominated for the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1936, and started the Anti-Opium Society and the Anti-Racist Society. He was from the Penang Free School and was the first medical student from Malaysia in Cambridge, United Kingdom, and top student every year he was there, a scholar and activist extraordinaire. There is now a Dr. Wu Lien-Teh Society to remember his great legacy (<http://wulientehsociety.org/>). He wrote extensively on medical issue including for the World Health Organisation (WHO). He also wrote a book on the King & Queen Scholarships under the Colonial Era, the most prestigious university scholarship in the UK. Dr. Wu Lien-Teh and Dr. Lim Chong Eu, a former Chief Minister, were among those to receive it. The book records some of the most brilliant people of those times.

4. Another legend was Mohamed Haniff (1872-1930), a botanist extraordinaire, graduated from the Penang Free School, worked a lifetime at Penang Botanical Gardens and had over a dozen plants named after him and helped all the great British botanists with their work. To celebrate this "barefoot" scholar, I arranged for the PFS Foundation to set up a Ten Thousand Ringgit a year trust fund for USM to give out to mini projects, lectures, workshops, etc. USM gave a matching Ten Thousand

Ringgit and it flourished for several years under the leadership of Dr. Chan Lai Keng, including organising a historic symposium on “The Role of the Penang Botanic Gardens: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century”. It needs to be seriously resuscitated.

5. Lastly there was the Malayan Teacher’s College in Gelugor that trained pioneering teachers in Science and they generously provided USM a home in its early years. It now also has the Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics (RECSAM), making Penang a leader in this field. Never forget that they provided USM its first home in 1969 and shared its excellent facilities.

The Birth of USM

The story of USM begins with the story of the University of Malaya, which was opened in Singapore in 1905 when it was part of the Straits Settlements and later, Malaya. Many philanthropists in Penang contributed to its initial founding. University of Malaya (UM) sent a team to start the "University of Malaya" branch in 1957 in Kuala Lumpur. The Singapore campus was called “University of Malaya, Singapore” while the Kuala Lumpur one was called “University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur”. I enrolled there in 1961 when it had that name.

In 1962, UM Kuala Lumpur became independent and took the name “University of Malaya” while the older university changed its name to "University of Singapore". I was the President of the University of Malaya Students Union (UMSU) then. Incidentally, the President of the University of Singapore’s Student Union was also a Malaysian, Dr. Ling Leong Sik (my classmate in primary school in Taiping) who, after graduation, moved to Penang and set up a clinic. He joined the University of Malaya Graduate Society that was most active in Penang and helped USM. It was a high level team from the University of Malaya, led by its Vice Chancellor, the eminent Professor Sir Alexander Oppenheim, who did the key pioneering work of establishing USM. They visited numerous sites and made strategic recommendations that were adopted. It also was a team from UM in Kuala Lumpur that were the inaugural staff which included the VC, Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut, and 4 professors. The first Bursar and the Librarian were also from the UM, as was a key administrative officer Mr. Kandasamy. The Registrar was also a graduate from UM when it was in Singapore.

USM itself had three names, you could say three births, namely:

1. University College of Penang (7 August 1967)
2. University Pulau Pinang (Minden Heights) (June 1969)
3. University Sains Malaysia (USM) (April 1972)

There are three reasons given for the change of name from "Pulau Pinang" to "Sains". The first was that it will then not seem to be only a local university, it will remember its Legacy of beginning with the sciences and thirdly, not much talked about, was that it will not encourage a premature cascade of every state in Malaysia demanding a university too as prestige and a right.

USM also saw several changes in its logos. A key in the current logo was played by Mr GS Reuters, who was my Art teacher of the Penang Free School. He was responsible for several logos in Penang including that of the Penang Tourist Association and the Consumers Association of Penang (CAP). The powerful and symbolic colour purple was also chosen to be the core colour of USM including its graduation robes.

Battle for Minden

The choice for a physical venue for USM was a major struggle. A study was done by a team led by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya. They found the recommended places at Sungai Ara/Batu Uban/Batu Maung problematic and unsuitable and strongly recommended it to be located at Minden Barracks (formerly Gelugor Barracks) as the British were vacating it. It would enable USM to move and grow faster. For some of us it was also the public heritage value and that the transformation of a military base into an education centre was so meaningful and a symbol of moving from war to peace. (Interestingly USM was the first institution to start a Peace Studies program!). However the Malaysian military wanted the prestigious barracks and, interestingly, the political party, UMNO, in Penang was also strongly opposed to USM getting it. I persuaded University of Malaya Graduate Society of which I was a council member, to make a strong press statement in support of USM being given Minden Barracks' was carried by the leading press. I will give the University library, for its archives, a copy of that historic statement which I helped to draft. Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister, decided that education was more important during these times and the Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman and the cabinet supported him. USM got the Minden Barracks and the Malaysian Military got the vast Batu Uban area where they built a new Military barracks including a hall that is now popular for weddings. What is interesting and there are lovely photographs of it, is that the official opening of the shots lived Universiti Pulau Pinang was actually held there and Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister, launched the beautiful designed brick and mortar structure for the foundation stone. The Chief Minister of Penang Tan Sri Wong Poe Nee and DS Ramanathan were present. The structure has been since been removed and do hope that historic monument is kept securely somewhere.

About Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut (1927-1996)

I had a long relationship with USM's former Vice Chancellor, Tan Sri Hamzah Sendut. He was my Geography teacher at University of Malaya and also my hostel master. He contacted me immediately after his appointment in 1969 to help in settling down in Penang. I was then Asst. City Secretary in charge of Development at the City Council. I took him to stationary shops, arranged for finding quarters for the pioneers of the City Council. I arranged for him to stay in a beautiful mansion, which is now the City Mayor's official residence Park Road in the plush Pulau Tikus residential area. I also

arranged for three other pioneering professors to rent the beautiful City Council bungalow homes next to Suffolk House, off Jalan Air Itam. I connected Tan Sri with the alumni of the Universiti of Malaya Graduate Society and other Alumni associations. A geographer and planner, he was very caring of the USM campus environment, maintaining its greenery and biodiversity. This tradition evolved beautifully into a true “University in a Garden” under the visionary leadership of Tan Sri Dzulkifli Razak, the former Vice Chancellor who also led to USM getting the APEX, the leading research university status in the country. Tan Sri Dzulkifli also made USM a leader in sustainability studies including becoming a regional leader in education for sustainability. He also made USM a global leader in higher education with him elected as the President of the International Association of Universities (IAU), the only Malaysian to achieve that honour.

Some of the key players and supporters in the founding of USM are many but three are often forgotten:

1. DS Ramanathan
- 2 The University of Malaya Graduate Society
3. The City Council of George Town

About DS Ramanathan

If any outside individual in Penang played a greater advocacy role in the foundation of USM, it was DS Ramanathan. He was the first person to openly suggest the formation of the university in Penang at the State Assembly in 1962. He subsequently chaired the University Committee of the State Government of Penang. He was a leading educationist, Headmaster of the Pykett School and later President of National Union of Teachers. He was a founder President of the Labour Party and the Socialist Front and later left to become President of MIC, Penang. Most significantly, he was the Mayor of the City of George Town for several years. The City remembered him by renaming Scott Road to Jalan DS Ramanathan (the signboard was defaced many times with black paint by people who opposed him and the change of name that it had to be moved up to six feet at one stage. Incidentally, his home was at the end of that road at the junction with Gottlieb Road. It is now a popular hawker complex. He was a strong supporter of hawkers. Interestingly, USM did a major study of hawkers in Penang who incidentally contribute greatly to the economy in Penang. In fact one UN expert told us in the consumer movement some three decades ago that in his estimates the hawkers of Penang contributed more to the economy of Penang than all the multinational corporation operating then in Penang!

About the University Alumni Associations

Also remarkable were its early years were the close links with the various University Alumni groups in Penang. The Australia, New Zealand, and American alumni groups in Penang were supportive. Most of all, it was the University of Malaya Graduate Society that supported USM intensively. We had a wonderful meeting with him on 6th July 1969 and the Vice Chancellor shared some ten ways to proceed in the development of USM. I will give a copy of the document of that to USM for its archives. The MU Graduates Society proceeded to hold a film premiere, "The Sicilian Clan", in the Odeon Theatre in George Town to raise money for USM and had full house. The Society, as I mentioned earlier, also played a strong public role in the campaign for USM getting the Minden Barracks.

The City Council of George Town

Tan Sri Hamzah and I had a common interest in urban issues and planning. I was then the Asst. Secretary of the City Council of George Town in charge of Development. After discussing with him I organised the fundraising for setting up of the Chair in urban studies. In the early seventies I found an ingenious idea (first time I am sharing this story), and persuaded the City Council to preapprove some land for a petrol station at Dato Keramat Road (stadium entrance) by tender. Such sites were hard to get and the petroleum companies were strongly want more sites in the City. Because of the competition and the pre-approved status we got the very substantial money, and USM was able to establish a chair in urban studies and more. Interestingly, one of the holders of the chair was Tan Sri Prof. Kamal Salih later the founder of the International Medical College and the think tank, Malaysian Institute for Economics Research (MIER). He was also my student at the Royal Military College where I was teaching Economics there in 1965. The Trust Fund of that chair now had a substantial amount of money, several million now over the years and can be a trigger for more innovation activities relating to urban issues perhaps even the first International Hawkers Research Center since USM already did a research project on that subject.

The Spirit of USM

USM from the beginning was different. It had from the start a different and refreshing spirit which continued in various ways over the last 50 years. There were five particular qualities that I feel stood out; Creativity, Competence, Courage, Caring, and the spirit of Community.

23 Pioneering Works

Let me share some personal experiences of examples that encompassed these five qualities. These are 23 initiatives that were inspiring and made a special impact. From my personal experience the

“school” system rather than the “faculty” system to encourage interdisciplinary and transcending disciplines was the greatest start it could have and that made a great difference. It has now some 26 schools and 12 major research centres. There have been hundreds of initiatives of all kinds and I would like to share 23 of them because of my personal engagement with them in one I'm Ireland other:

1. We created the City In-Service Training Centre (CITC) with the City Council of George Town. Unemployment was high in the early 70's. I initiated a scheme where school leavers were given a part-time job as parking attendants. They worked as attendants for four hours and then did four hours of study at the CITC to do one of an amazing range of vocational training programmes. I invited Prof. Chatar Singh, one of the pioneering professors, to lead it and under this leadership we saw very professional development. It was located at the old maternity hospital at Macalister Road. The centre used the City and Guilds study and certification framework from the United Kingdom and there were courses for electricians, draftsmen, machinists, and many others. The German Government, which has a globally outstanding vocational training programme, also provided extensive equipment and several teachers through their German Volunteer programme. Over the years, a few hundred students went through these practical course. This was much appreciated, particularly with the growing industrial development in Penang. The CITC closed after a few years and that work was taken over by the outstanding Penang Skills Development Centre in which USM also played an important role. Tan Sri Dzulkifli, the former Vice Chancellor, and I had a plan to get this building for a city presence for USM, but it was given to the museum, which then desperately needed to renovate and expand. Instead, USM got the vacant ABN Bank office at Beach Street for, sadly, only a short period.

2. The USM Library was a global leader. I was then the Hon. Supervisor of the Penang Library, the oldest in the region, founded in 1817. The pioneer librarian, Edward Lim Huck Tee, was outstanding pioneer and his book, “History of Public Libraries in West Malaysia”, is a classic. USM was the leader in digitalising. In its early years, I donated some large wooden shelves to USM. USM also did an amazing comprehensive annotated bibliography on Penang. Jocelyn Tan, one of USM's students then and later a leading journalist with The Star newspaper, did some excellent work. USM should do a project to update it. USM also helped many training programmes for Library Management for schools and civil society groups together with the University of Malaya Graduate Society.

3. USM was a hotbed of activists and public intellectuals. They played key role in civil society including active engagement in various group like Aliran, Malaysian Nature Society, Consumers Association of Penang (CAP), Water Watch Penang, Sahabat Alam Malaysia, Arts Ed and cultural mapping, music, performing Arts, people with disability and many others. They also played a key role in the setting up the pioneering think tank called the Socio-economic and Environment Research Institute (SERI) which has now transformed into the Penang Institute. A good study of this civic engagement and the personalities involved will a useful document and inspiring.

4. I also arranged for USM to lead the Philanthropy Initiative in Malaysia. It published a unique and comprehensive book at the School of Social Sciences, “The Giving Society”, a pioneering unparalleled analysis of this field, and worthy of serious attention again.

5. The School of Pharmacy was a pioneer in Malaysia. It was also a strong partner of the International Organisation of Consumers Union (IOCU), which I led as President. There was Health Action International and Anti-Tobacco Campaign. One young (then) personality from USM in the nineteen eighties got the Olle Hanson Award named after a global health activist. That young person was Tan Sri Dzulkifli Razak, who is the current President of the USM Alumni. This was his first international award!

6. The School of Biology was particularly active and the Marine Research Centre at Batu Maung, initiated by the late Prof. CP Ramachandran, a global leader in Malaria issues and worked later for the World Health Organisation (WHO) was again outstanding. Very early they also had, in conjunction with the Malayan Nature Society', nature education project for children and my two kid and I attended the first such programme. Prof. Ho Sinn Chye, who later became the Vice Chancellor of Wawasan Open University (WOU) also played an active role. Particularly outstanding also was Dr. Leong Yueh Keong, who did the Penang Conservation Plan and also played a key role of getting the North-west area of Penang Island National Park status one of the unique smallest of such forested parks globally.

7. USM was also a university pioneer in photography and film, making two of its great staff, Ismail Hashim and Robert Crock, unforgettable. The latter did the pioneering book called "PENANG" with amazing photos of the state and authored by Margaratha Retnam, wife of another USM legend, Prof. KJ Retnam, a former Deputy Vice Chancellor who also initiated the Centre for Policy Studies and served on the board of the Penang Development Corporation. I also partnered with the USM team when I was President of the International Organisation of Consumers Union (IOCU) to make a pioneering film called "The Food Game". On educating young children on health matters. It was filmed entirely at the Federation School of the Deaf at Tanjung Bungah. A large size snake-and-ladder game was constructed out of wood by the students. A large dice was made rolled by the students time get a number. When you did good things like, eat healthy, you move up the ladder, and when you do bad things, like eating junk, food, you slide down the snake. Each moves significance was explained by a speaker and also done in sign language. It was a simple but profound education platform on food and nutrition. Unfortunately, the original film was lost in a fire at a USM audio-visual centre many years ago.

8. USM was a global leader in distance learning and academic "start-ups". Tan Sri Dr. Dhanaraj's leadership led to founding of Disted and the setting up of Wawasan Open University. Dr. Dhanaraj was also the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Centre in Canada. Prof. Sharom Amat, a former Deputy Vice Chancellor, also played a pioneering role there and in setting up the Brunei University and several others.

9. USM has been renowned for its commitment to care for the poor which was embodied in its Bottom Billion initiative. We must never forget Prof. Yunus, the recipient of the Nobel Prize for micro credit programs. He always appreciated USM, which the first university was making Malaysia the first country outside Bangladesh to be inspired by his pioneering work. USM did outstanding work in establishing a similar programme and it was so successful that it was taken national.

10. The pioneering role in the School of Mass Communication is also special. In the early eighties I developed with the School a globally pioneering consumer education programme using radio called “Calling all Consumers”. After a pilot project in Penang and with funding from the New Zealand government we organised the first ASEAN comprehensive two week training programme together with the Asian Institute of Broadcasting Development. (AIBD) bin Kuala Lumpur.

11. USM was the pioneer in gender studies with the setting up of a dedicated centre called KANITA. A world renowned scholar, Prof. Wazir Jahan Karim, initiated this. She also authored a pioneering “Directory of Welfare Services in Penang” in March 1980, the first such compilation in Malaysia.

12. USM has become a regional and global leader in the field of Archeology and has an excellent gallery and field sites.

13. The works of USM in the area of astronomy are also pioneering. Penang schools have taken interest in this field and set up astronomy centres and there is a interesting participatory programme on astronomy in the Tech Dome at Komtar.

14. USM pioneered, in 2009, hosting the Right Livelihood College (RLC), a University-Activist initiative, where all Right Livelihood Award (popularly known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize”) winners covering every public interest issue you can think of are “Fellows”. I had the privilege to initiate this and lead the College for four years as a visiting professor. USM became the incubator, hub, catalyst, multiplier and accelerator of this unique set up and it now has campuses involving every continent with campuses in ten leading universities globally. It was engaged in peace, justice, ecological sustainability, and eradicating poverty. After this pioneering work at USM, the Global secretariat of the RLC was handed over to Bonn University, where it was funded by the German Government and many others.(see www.rightlivelihood.org/college).It continues to be a thriving academic -activist network thanks to the pioneering work at USM.

15. The Asia Pacific University Community Engagement Network (APUCEN) is hosted by USM. I had the pleasure of drafting the Working Principles of this centre, which gave USM the regional leadership and facilitating role in University-Community engagement.

16. The pioneering “Decolonising Universities International Conference” was hosted by USM and led to an excellent book called “Decolonising the University” being published by USM. It was done together with Citizens International, which I initiated together with one of Malaysia’s greatest activists, the late Tuan Haji SM Idris. We did something pioneering at the conference where we got USM post-graduate candidate students from many countries to participate actively as facilitators and to present their own views at the concluding session. Engaging the next generation is of some significance. This was part of the “Youth for the Future” project with the Right Livelihood College which was hosted then at USM. USM also published a book together with RLC, titled “Changing

Course, Reclaiming Our Future”, an excellent description of the great challenges and actions needed in the future to make a better world.

17. The Global Ethic Project was initiated in Penang with the assistance of USM and was held in its centre in Beach Street. It involved four major programmes:

- a. Exhibition on all the religions and their values.
- b. Using calligraphy to promote harmony by promoting the Golden Rule “Treat others the way you would like to be treated”.
- c. Training guides for the Street of Harmony, Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, where all the major religions have their houses of worship located near each other, a model of diversity and harmony to the world.
- d. Three well attended workshops on Religion fighting corruption, saving the environment, and promoting peace.

(See website <https://www.global-ethic.org/>)

18. The scientific innovations and collaboration at USM with industries are many and I am sure someone will do justice to sharing those in one of your coming talks. The pioneering work on solar energy and worm fertilisers are two that were pioneering.

19. USM’s Department of Social Work leading an initiative on workers education was also pioneering. I suggested the programme and obtained funding from the Federation of Malaysia Family Planning Association and the United Nations to undertake a unique project called the Young Workers Community Education Programme. This was to study and support systematically the hundreds, later thousands, of young female workers in the new established electronics factories in the Free Trade Zone in Bayan Baru. The young workers were mostly from other states and needing social support.

20. USM also developed in 2013 one of the best books on volunteerism ever in Malaysia. It was called "Volunteering in Malaysia – Fostering Civic Responsibility", which gives an excellent history and the systematic structuring and developing this great resource. The Division of Industry and Community Network of USM initiated this and must be widely promoted.

21. In December 2011, USM also organised the first ever workshop on Future Studies jointly with the World Future Studies Federation (WSFS) and the Right Livelihood College. It was entitled

“Visionary Thinking for Tomorrow- creative, ethical imagination for designing our futures” This inspired Think City, a Khazanah’s subsidiary, to host two other such workshops.

22. The pioneering work USM did in the field of Peace Studies is well known. There is the Peace Studies unit, the Taiping Peace Initiative, and active engagements on some of the main conflicts in the region is quite remarkable. The "Peace Poles with engravings of the words " May Peace prevail on Earth " in all the official languages of the Nations at one of the main roundabouts USM are a unique mark of this area of work. As Chairperson of the Taiping Peace Initiative I arranged for these to be hand made at Taiping, a town whose name means "everlasting peace" in Chinese and where I grew up in my youth.

23. USM has also led the Regional Centre for Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development. It worked with the United Nations University in Tokyo, Japan. This too was pioneering and USM became a regional leader.

There are, of course, many others great initiative, innovations and successes but forgive me as I can only talk about those that I have been directly engaged with in one form or another.

Ideas for the Future

I have seven ideas for the future:

1. USM could set up an Institute of Social History. A systemic centre like the one in Netherlands that promotes and archives Penang’s and Malaysia’s social history.
2. Setting up a Bio mimicry Initiative as is being done in many countries. It researches and utilises the power of nature for innovation. It is a growing creative movement that binds our links with nature.
3. Do a new edition of the annotated bibliography of Penang, which it did in its early years; updated and digitalised by contagious project that can be called “Penangpedia” and developed also to include audio
4. As USM is a significant publisher but not that well known, it can begin to initiate a Penang Book Festival perhaps in conjunction with the Penang International Literary Festival. Penang has printed more books in the last decade than in the last 200 years. A great opportunity awaits USM.
5. Initiate the UN Days of Action Initiative making a formal systematic action to do things that inform, inspire, ignite, to make the world better There could a booklet series on “99 Things You Can

Do” for those day ..Different Schools and Research centre can each be asked to lead in one day related to their field. E.g. world Peace day, Biodiversity Day, Women Day and many others

6. Special global lectures can be a series addressing the global challenges ahead. There are many for the world and suggest the following seven topics as a start.

- Ecocide and the destruction of our environment
- Hate and violence
- Impunity and integrity
- The post-truth era and fake news
- The digital revolution
- Food security
- Healthy living

Each of these should be subjects of a new lecture series on “Global Challenges – Today and tomorrow”.

7. Values education is very important during these times’ like to share with you an idea of “11 Sins against Humanity” that you should make as part of the orientation of USM students, with an education series on it which be a model for the world. The 11 "Sins against Humanity" are as follows:

- i. Politics without principles
- ii. Wealth without work
- iii. Enjoyment without conscience

- iv. Knowledge without character
- v. Business without morality
- vi. Science without humanity
- vii. Religion without compassion
- viii. Rights without responsibility
- ix. Power without accountability
- x. Development without sustainability
- xi. Laws without justice

The first seven were shared with the world by Mahatma Gandhi. The last four were my additions to meet current concerns.

Conclusion

USM will certainly keep soaring upwards if it continues to be more than producing PhDs but also BSTs (blood, sweat, tears) and GTD (getting things done) people. If you continue to be rooted in soil, soul, and society, you will continue to be a champion in creativity, competence, courage, caring, and the community. Finally remember this saying - "If you want to grow, make the whole world your garden. If you want to learn, make the whole world your university".

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ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dato' (Dr.) Anwar Fazal
Director, Right Livelihood College (RLC)

Trained in Economics and Education at the University of Malaya (1961-1964), Anwar Fazal was a key player in the founding of over dozen local and global civil society networks. He was President of several worldwide organisations including the International Organisation of Consumers Union (IOCU), The Hague, Netherlands and Environment Liaison Centre International, Nairobi, Kenya. He was instrumental in initiating the idea of several popular mobilisation days such as World Consumer Rights Day (March 15) and World Migrants Day (18 December).

Anwar Fazal led the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Good Urban Governance in Asia and the Pacific for 12 years. Presently, he is Chairperson of Think City, a Penang, Malaysia, based platform for innovative urban rejuvenation and President of The Dr. Wu Lien-Teh Society, which honours one of the most outstanding public health personalities in Malaysian, Chinese and global health history. Anwar is also the founder and currently Director of The Right Livelihood College (RLC), an innovative platform for University-Change maker's collaboration working to build knowledge, wisdom and action to promote ecological balance, justice and peace. The Global Secretariat of the College is at the University of Bonn, Germany with branch campuses based in Sweden, Ethiopia, Nigeria, USA, Chile, India, Argentina and Thailand. He has also served as Professor at the Centre of Policy and International Studies at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia and is a Fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Science (WAAS).

For his work, Anwar has received the Right Livelihood Award (popularly known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize"), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Global 500 honour, the Malaysian Government Langkawi Environmental Award and the UNDP Malaysia Sustainable Development Goals Award for his work on health and maternal issues. He is also the recipient of Hon. Doctorate's in law and philosophy from the National University of Malaysia (UKM) and the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) respectively.