



In the front row are Hamidah Naziadin (fifth from left), CIMB Foundation Board of Trustee Datuk Robert Cheim (sixth from left), UKM deputy vice-chancellor (Industry and community partnership) Professor Datuk Dr Imran Ho Abdullah (fourth from right) with student delegates at the closing ceremony of the 2017 CIMB Young ASEAN Leaders programme. PIC BY OSMAN ADNAN

## WORKSHOPS

# Uniting youths to shape Asean's future

ROZANA SANI  
rsani@nst.com.my

**A**BETTER understanding of current issues, and a deeper sense of shared responsibility in shaping Asean's sustainable future based on the principle of inclusivity were the key takeaways for participants of the recently concluded CIMB Young ASEAN Leaders (CYAL) programme.

Organised by CIMB Foundation in partnership with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), the annual event — which is now in its fifth year — brought together 50 undergraduates from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam for a four-day workshop on Asean's economic future, with the theme 'Sharing Economy Beyond Boundaries'.

Aimed at creating a platform for young Asean leaders to share experiences, it is hoped that after and beyond the event they will be inspired to initiate programmes that benefit their respective home communities.

CIMB Foundation chief executive officer Datuk Hamidah Naziadin said this year's theme — Sharing Economy Beyond Boundaries — focused on two sub-topics: the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) characterised by new technologies that blur the lines between the physical and virtual worlds which redefine ways to live, work and connect; and secondly, the concept of a sharing economy that aims to democratise and leverage on a community's collective physical and intellectual resources.

"It is imperative that youths be empowered to help us shape the future of Asean, for they are the ones who will inherit it from current leaders. And what better time than during their undergraduate years to inculcate in them the importance of embracing and promoting Asean's diversity to maintain its strength, peace and prosperity as an economic bloc supporting over 630 million

people" she said in her speech at the closing of the event.

"The 4IR has given rise to a borderless world where collaborative and on-demand economy is fast becoming the norm, democratising the way goods and services are supplied, and information is shared.

"Our aim is for participants to not only brainstorm on opportunities afforded by this new tech-defined operating landscape, but also reflect on how such developments may exclude pockets of society," she continued.

The four-day workshop discussed Asean identity and unity, entrepreneurship in the 4IR, socio-economics of Asean countries and online web creation and e-commerce.

There was also a special panel session on entrepreneurship featuring successful young entrepreneurs across the Asean region. Key speakers for the panel session include Ambika Sangaran — a partner at Bi-Ji Initiative, Jom Tumpang CEO Mohamed Ismail Shaik, ILM Legacy Sdn Bhd CEO Wan Nong Muzafar, WHEE project managing director Rhonwyn Hagedorn and Roboticist Malaysia managing director Ilyia Kamaruzaman.

Muhammad Rizal Saanun, 21, from Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta in Indonesia said meeting new people from the 10 Asean countries and the speakers was an incredible experience.

"I can bring back the knowledge that I have gained from CYAL especially on entrepreneurship back to my university in Indonesia. I have also learned about the essence of Asean citizenship — that it is more than just friendship which is more valuable in the future," he said.

Although Tea Jalin Castillo Ty, 20, from University of the Philippines Diliman have been involved in programmes for Asean youth before, she found the focus on being different yet similar something refreshing.

"Working together with youths from other

Asean countries means interacting with people who come from very different but similar cultures. That dynamic of similar but different truly defines what it means to be Asean. The spotlight on the 4IR in the Asean perspective as faced as one region has made me consider future prospects in Asean, rather than just my own country. I would definitely stay in touch with new friends and they may be colleagues in future projects," she said.

Nur Faiz Mohamad, 20, from UKM believes the future of Asean is bright.

"We have been taught about being better leaders. I came to the programme with a viewpoint of a law student and am taking away a wider perspective in areas like business and economy. This programme allowed us to set up networking and connections which will be useful in the future," he said.

At the closing of CYAL, Hamidah announced the setting up of a CYAL alumni network.

"It is hoped that this will bring past participants of the programme together to have more sharing on current and future issues and come up with more ideas that can be implemented not just in Malaysia but also in the Asean region," she said.

"The key to Asean's future success lies in these youths, whom we hope will develop into holistic strategists and effective change agents who can successfully embrace the new frontier, anticipate the next, and most importantly address the pressing needs of tomorrow to ensure Asean's sustainable success as a region," added Hamidah.

CIMB Foundation is a non-profit organisation set up to implement CIMB Group's corporate social responsibility and philanthropic initiatives. Established in November 2007, CIMB Foundation is tasked with strategising and implementing corporate responsibility initiatives, disbursing millions to various programmes related to community development, sports and education.

In the past 10 years, CIMB Foundation has disbursed RM120 million through 962 projects benefiting 700,000 people in the communities served by CIMB Group.



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**HAMIDAH NAZIADIN**  
CIMB Foundation CEO



**Muhammad Rizal Saanun**