Visit by the Deputy Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities to Palm Oil Mill Technology Centre (POMTEC)

Dato’ Hamzah Zainudin, the Deputy Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, visited the Palm Oil Mill Technology Centre (POMTEC) in Labu, Negeri Sembilan on 3 December 2010. POMTEC, which was officially launched on 30 November 2004 by Dato’ Seri Utama Haji Mohamad Haji Hassan, the Menteri Besar of Negeri Sembilan, undertakes research in the areas of milling, biomass and effluent treatment. The visit was also participated by Dato’ Seri Utama Shahrir Abdul Samad, Chairman of MPOB; Tuan Haji Ahmad Sidek Stroo, Acting Deputy Director-General (Services), MPOB and senior officers from Sime Darby Plantations Berhad.

The Deputy Minister was briefed by Tuan Haji Zulkifli Abd Rahman, Head of Manufacturing and Processing, MPOB and Dr Sivasothy Kandiah, Principal Research Officer of MPOB on the research activities at POMTEC and continuous sterilization technology. Briefing on mill operations was given by Mohd Azhar Md Zain, Plant Manager of POMTEC. POMTEC has been equipped with the latest manufacturing technology, as well as research and pilot plant facilities such as Oil Waste Tertiary Bioprocessing Centre, Biomass and Phenolic Pilot Plants for the treatment and usage of oil palm mill waste.

Appointment of the New Deputy Director-General (R&D) of MPOB

MPOB welcomes the appointment of Dr Ahmad Kushairi Din as the new Deputy Director-General (R&D) with effect from 3 January 2011. Dr Ahmad Kushairi succeeds Datuk Dr Choo Yuen May, who was appointed the Director-General of MPOB with effect from 18 October 2010.

Prior to his appointment, Dr Ahmad Kushairi was the Director of Biological Research Division of MPOB.

Appointment of the Acting Director of Finance Management and Development Division of MPOB

MPOB also welcomes the appointment of Tuan Haji Mohamad Nor Abdul Rahman as Acting Director of Finance Management and Development Division with effect from 1 March 2011. Tuan Haji Mohamad Nor succeeds Tuan Haji Ahmad Sidek Stroo, who was appointed as Acting Deputy Director-General (Services) of MPOB with effect from 10 February 2010.

Prior to his appointment, Tuan Haji Mohamad Nor was the Head of Human Resources Unit of MPOB.

Most Outstanding Malaysian Women Award

Datuk Dr Choo Yuen May, Director-General of MPOB, received the Most Outstanding Malaysian Women Award during the International Women’s Day 100th Anniversary which was held at the Sunway Pyramid Convention Centre on 6 March 2011. It was organized by the Malaysian Chinese Women Leaders Caucus and supported by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community. Datuk Dr Choo received the award in recognition of her important contributions in palm oil research and development which led to increases in production and usage of palm oil. She has published 686 scientific articles related to oil palm and filed 43 patents.

22nd Session of Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)

The 22nd Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) was held at the Shangri-La’s Rasa Sayang Resort & Spa, Pulau Pinang from 21-25 February 2011. The CCFO session is held biennially and Malaysia has been the host country for CCFO since 2007. The chairperson of the 22nd session was Ms Noraini Mohd Othman, Senior Director of Food Safety and Quality Division, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health. The session was attended by 100 participants from 31 member countries, one member organization and nine international organizations.

The Malaysian delegation was headed by Datuk Dr Choo Yuen May, Director-General of MPOB. Dr Kalanithi Nesaretnam, Director of the Product Development and Advisory Services Division of MPOB, was the alternate Head of Delegation. The 16 members in the Malaysian delegation comprised representatives from MPOB, Ministry of Plantations Industries and Commodities, Ministry of Health, Malaysian Palm Oil Council, Palm Oil Refineries Association of Malaysia, Nestle (M) Sdn Bhd and Sime Darby.

The meeting was a success because Malaysia succeeded in advancing all palm-related issues to
the next Codex step for adoption by the Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva in July 2011.

Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting

The 31st Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held from 4 - 8 April 2011 at MPOB Head Office. The PAC is a committee, which was established by the MPOB Governing Board to advise it on the research programmes that are to be conducted by MPOB. This annual event enables the research activities to be scrutinized to ensure that the projects are technically sound and are in line with the needs of the industry and country. The PAC members have diverse expertise, knowledge, experience and background to help the Board in this regard. During the meeting, Dato’ Seri Utama Shahrir Abd Samad, Chairman of MPOB, also hosted a dinner for the PAC members. On the final day, the members visited the Sime Darby Biodiesel Plant at Carey Island, Selangor.

Launching of MPOB’s Pusat Latihan Industri Sawit (PLASMA)

Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities officially launched MPOB’s Pusat Latihan Industri Sawit (PLASMA) Keratong, Pahang on 28 April 2011. PLASMA Keratong has been equipped with an administration block, assembly hall, lecture block, mechanisation workshop, hostel, dining hall, staff quarters and numerous facilities related to the oil palm nursery. The centre provides training to the oil palm plantation workers in aspects of mechanization, namely Farm Mechanization Operators Course (KOML) and supports the oil palm smallholders with appropriate technologies in oil palm cultivation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, MEETINGS AND COURSES

Second Palm Oil Trade and Seminar (POTS Karachi) 2011

MPOB and the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) jointly organized the Palm Oil Trade and Seminar (POTS Karachi) 2011 in Karachi, Pakistan on 17 - 18 January 2011 which was officiated by Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities.

The event was also attended by Mr Mir Hazar Khan Bijrani, Minister of Industry and Production of Pakistan; Dato’ Admal Anuar Adnan, Malaysian Ambassador to Pakistan; Datin Paduka Nurhala Abdul Rahim, then Deputy Chief Secretary 1, Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities; Datuk Dr Choo Yuen May, Director-General of MPOB and Tan Sri Dr Yusof Basiron, Chief Executive of MPOC. A total of 270 participants attended the seminar with the theme, Retaining Leadership, Reinforcing Relations and six papers on palm oil-based products were presented during the seminar.

Penang International Halal Exhibition and Conferences (PIHEC) 2011

MPOB participated in the Penang International Halal Exhibition and Conference 2011 (PIHEC), which was held concurrently at the Eastin Hotel, Pulau Pinang and the Penang International Sports Arena (PISA) on 25 – 27 February 2011. The Conference was also attended by participants from Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Thailand, Indonesia, World China Muslim Association, Kyrgyzstan and South Korea. A 56-member trade delegation of business leaders and senior corporate officers from IRPC Public Company Limited of Thailand headed by Mr Sahaschai Panichapong, was warmly welcomed with a brief presentation by Halal Penang after touring the exhibiting booths. The Halal Conference, themed Creating Opportunities through Halal Research, drew good participation. The day featured distinguished, renowned experts from international and local research institutions, universities and private bodies to help introduce innovations and generate solutions in the ever-growing biotech and life sciences industry.

Intensive Diploma in Oil Palm Management and Technologies (IDOPMT) 2011

Dr Ahmad Kushairi Din, then Acting Deputy Director-General (R&D) of MPOB officially launched the Intensive Diploma in Oil Palm Management and Technologies 2011 on 18 April 2011 at the MPOB Head Office, Bangi. A total of 25 participants, who were interested in pursuing their knowledge in science of oil palm, management and technologies of oil palm cultivation, attended the course.

Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) Seminar

More than 500 participants attended a half-day seminar at Bactris Hall, MPOB Head Office, Bangi on 7 April 2011. The Seminar was held in conjuction with the 31st PAC meeting.

The Seminar was organized into six sessions, as follows:

Session 1: Development of High Yielding Varieties of Rice: Reflections on Oil Palm Breeding by Gurdev S Khush, University of California, USA;

Session 3: Formulating for Stability: How an Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico Helps the Cosmetic Industry to Create Greener Formulations by Johann W Wiechers, JW Solutions, The Netherlands;

Session 4: Saturated Fat Reduction in Food Products by Kevin Warren Smith, Fat Science Consulting Ltd, United Kingdom;

Session 5: Global Economic Scenario and its Impact on Commodity Prices by Zakariah Abdul Rashid, Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, Malaysia;

Session 6: Comparing the Experience of the Malaysian and Indonesian Oil Palm Sectors over the Past Year by James Fry, LMC International Ltd., United Kingdom.

The Seminar was held to disseminate and gain knowledge on the latest developments in the oil palm industry.