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ALUMNI INDUSTRY COMMUNITY

ALUMNI LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Afiza Idris: Leading Malaysia's Energy Transition Through Knowledge & Leadership

MINISTRY OF ECONOMY MALAYSIA I SPECIAL FEATURE I SBE UPM ALUMNI PROFILE

"Knowledge not only builds expertise, but also cultivates discipline, integrity, and the ability to lead change."

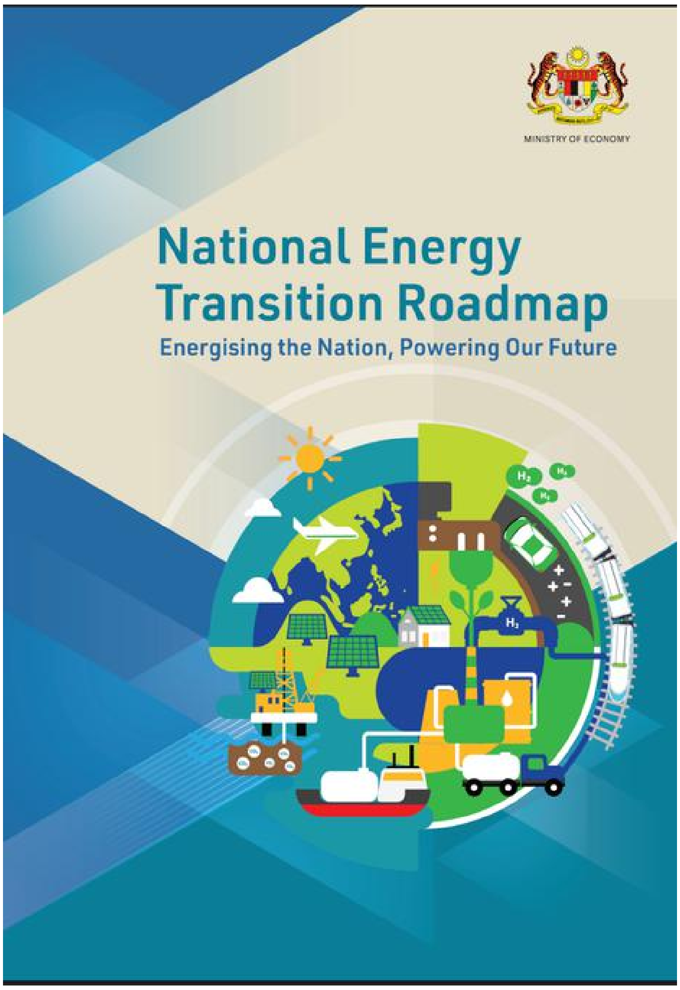
Dr. Afiza Idris
Director, Energy Division
Ministry of Economy, Malaysia

Dr. Afiza Idris is the Director of the Energy Division at the Ministry of Economy, Malaysia, where she leads strategic planning and policy development for the nation's energy sector. With more than two decades of experience in the Malaysian public service, she has contributed significantly to numerous national development initiatives, particularly in the fields of economics and energy.

Among her most notable achievements is her leadership in developing the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR), a key strategic framework that accelerates Malaysia's transition towards a low-carbon economy and sustainable development.

FOUNDATIONS AT UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

As an alumna of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Dr. Afiza obtained her Master of Economics degree from the university. For her, UPM was not merely an institution of academic excellence, but also a place that nurtured critical thinking, strengthened research discipline, and instilled strong professional values. Her experience as a student laid an important foundation that shaped both her character and her approach to serving the nation as a public servant and organisational leader.



A DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC CAREER

Dr. Afiza began her career at the Ministry of Finance in 2000 before eventually joining the Economic Planning Unit (EPU). Her extensive experience in economics, finance, and national development planning has strengthened her expertise in formulating policies grounded in data and evidence-based analysis while carefully balancing economic growth, public well-being, and national sustainability.

Defining True Success

"True success is measured not by titles or recognition, but by one's ability to create value, make a positive impact on society, and leave a lasting legacy that contributes to the nation's continuous progress."

— Dr. Afiza Idris

The Value of Postgraduate Research

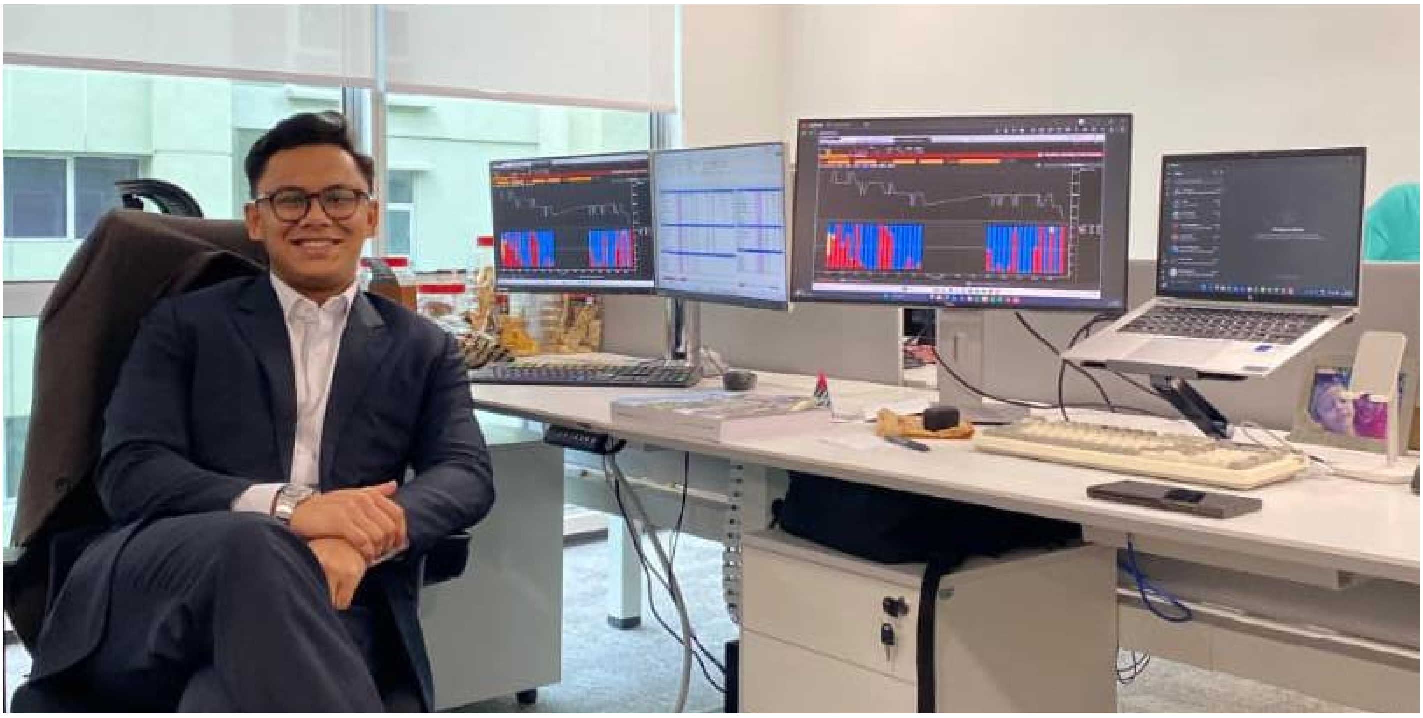
Reflecting on her years at UPM, Dr. Afiza describes her time at the university as one of the most meaningful phases of her life. Beyond academic knowledge from distinguised lecturers - particularly Prof. Dr. Normaz Wana Ismail and Prof. Dr. Muzafar Shah Habibullah, she built lasting relationships with researchers from diverse backgrounds. The research journey taught her the importance of discipline, precision, patience, and humility. Every finding required credible evidence, careful validation, and strong justification—principles that now directly guide her policymaking in government.

As the leader of a strategic government division, Dr. Afiza places great emphasis onhuman capital development, particularly in mentoring younger generations in theworkplace. She believes that academic excellence should be complemented by strong communication skills, critical thinking, and the willingness to embrace lifelonglearning and adapt to change. She also encourages toda graduates to broaden their perspectives beyond their areas of specialisation in order to better understand the economic, social, and global issues that influence policy decisions.

According to her, a capable professional is not only technically competent but is also able to evaluate issues from multiple perspectives before making informed decisions. In todays digital era, where Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming increasingly prevalent, Dr. Afiza believes that technology should be utilised responsibly. While AI can improve efficiency and productivity, she emphasises that all information generated must still be carefully verified, validated, and critically evaluated. In her view, technology can never replace professional judgement, integrity, and individual accountability in ensuring that decisions are accurate and evidence-based. This principle is one that she consistently instils in the officers under her leadership.

Mr. Muhamad Farhan
Taking the Bull by the Horns: A Journey Through Malaysia's Capital Markets

"Our achievements reflect the strength of the foundation built at SBE UPM. Wherever your journey takes you, continue to pursue excellence, give back to society, and proudly uphold the name of our alma mater."



BORN INTO FINANCE, BUILT AT SBE UPM

For this distinguished SBE alumnus, a career in finance was more than a childhood aspiration—it was a journey shaped by family influence, academic excellence, and a willingness to embrace every learning opportunity.

Growing up in a family immersed in the investment industry, the world of finance always felt familiar. However, it was the education and experiences at the School of Business and Economics (SBE), Universiti Putra Malaysia, that transformed this early passion into a professional calling.

"UPM provided me with more than academic knowledge. It taught me that strong analytical skills must be complemented by the confidence to communicate ideas effectively," he reflects. From moderating student forums to emceeing university events, SBE nurtured both his technical expertise and leadership abilities.

Memories Beyond the Classroom

Among the most treasured memories were not lectures or examinations, but the friendships forged throughout university life. The daily walks to class, late-night study sessions, endless discussions over meals, spontaneous travel plans that never quite happened, and even negotiating for extra marks with lecturers remain unforgettable experiences. These moments built lifelong friendships and created memories that continue to bring laughter years later.

Learning the Industry from Every Angle

Rather than taking the conventional route into equity research, he deliberately chose to understand every segment of the capital market ecosystem. His professional journey included:

Private Wealth & Sales at Maybank, where he gained insights into serving high-net-worth clients.
Trading & Asset Management at CGS International, developing expertise in financial modelling, institutional trading, and portfolio management.
Corporate Finance at UEM Sunrise Berhad, evaluating mergers and acquisitions, RNAV valuations, and strategic investment decisions.

These diverse experiences eventually led him to **Hong Leong Investment Bank (HLIB)** as a **Research Analyst** specialising in the **Malaysian REIT sector.** Today, he analyses companies through multiple perspectives—not only as a research analyst, but also with the understanding of a trader, fund manager, and corporate finance professional.

广东金融学院
Guangdong University of Finance

Guangzhou Youth Financial Literacy Exchange
Prof. Madya Dr. Mohd Naseem Niaz Ahmad
Guangzhou City, Guangdong Province

UPM Strengthens Global Community Engagement Through Guangzhou Youth Financial Literacy Exchange

The School of Business and Economics (SBE), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), successfully conducted the Guangzhou Youth Financial Literacy Exchange on 21 May 2026 at the Financial Simulation Laboratory, Guangdong University of Finance, China. The programme reflected UPM's commitment to empowering communities through international knowledge exchange while promoting financial literacy among young adults.

The initiative brought together 10 young participants aged 18–35 from the Guangzhou community to enhance their understanding of personal financial management, credit responsibility, budgeting, financial resilience, and safe investment practices. The programme aimed to strengthen participants' socio-economic well-being by equipping them with practical financial decision-making skills.

Participants engaged in a series of interactive activities, including personal financial health assessments, mentoring sessions on market risk management, and simulations covering asset allocation, emergency budgeting, and strategies to avoid high-risk digital lending schemes. These hands-on learning experiences enabled participants to apply financial concepts in realistic scenarios while building confidence in managing their personal finances.

The programme also highlighted several financial challenges faced by urban youth in Guangzhou, particularly the rising cost of living and increasing exposure to digital micro-lending platforms. Evaluation results showed that participants developed greater awareness of financial risks, successfully prepared personal savings plans, and demonstrated improved knowledge of responsible borrowing and basic investment principles.

Through initiatives such as this, UPM continues to expand its global community engagement efforts by fostering international collaboration, promoting financial literacy, and contributing to the development of financially resilient communities beyond national borders.

JSE INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL FESTIVAL 2026

The **JSE International Football Festival 2026,** held at Universiti Putra Malaysia, from 9–12 July 2026, officiated by our Vice Chancellor, YBhg. Dato Prof. Ir. Dr. Ahmad Farhan Mohd Sadullah, provided a valuable experiential learning opportunity for 50 students through direct involvement in the planning and execution of a live international sporting event.

Throughout the four-day programme, students gained practical experience in event planning, technical operations, public communication, teamwork, and problem-solving while developing confidence and workplace readiness. The hands-on learning complemented classroom knowledge and strengthened essential employability skills relevant to the sports, events, tourism, and hospitality industries.

The programme also reinforced UPM's commitment to experiential learning by fostering stronger university–industry collaboration and preparing graduates with practical competencies valued by employers. Overall, the festival demonstrated how structured industry engagement can create meaningful educational outcomes while enhancing students' career readiness and professional development.

Nasi Lemak Kopi O (NLKO) TV9

GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS AND MALAYSIA'S FOOD SECURITY

Overview

How do distant geopolitical conflicts ripple across the globe to affect the meals on our dining tables? Prof. Dr. Shaufique Fahmi Ahmad Sidique recently joined TV9's Nasi Lemak Kopi O (NLKO) for an insightful segment titled "Krisis Bekalan Global: Mengapa Kehidupan Harian Kita Masih Berjalan Seperti Biasa?" to unpack this vital issue.

Key Insights & Reshaping Public Perception

Throughout the discussion, Prof. Shaufique highlighted how interconnected global dynamics—ranging from geopolitical strife and soaring energy prices to maritime transportation costs and supply chain disruptions—directly impact domestic food inflation. By shedding light on these intricate external pressures, the interview helps reframe public understanding, steering conversations away from misattributed domestic policies toward a clearer global economic perspective.

Ensuring National Food Security & Reassuring the Public

While a heavy reliance on imported raw goods often triggers public anxiety over food scarcity and fluctuating prices, the dialogue underscored Malaysia's proactive measures to fortify national food security. Through strategic import diversification, enhanced domestic production, and robust agricultural frameworks, the country is well-positioned to buffer against supply chain vulnerabilities. Highlighting these structural efforts helps soothe public concern, dispelling fears of basic commodity shortages while reinforcing Malaysia's long-term food sovereignty against potential global disruptions.

Malaysia Hari Ini (MHI TV3)

GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS AND MALAYSIA'S FOOD SECURITY

Overview

How does a crisis thousands of miles away directly affect the food on our tables? Recently, Prof. Dr. Shaufique Fahmi Ahmad Sidique was featured on TV3's Malaysia Hari Ini (MHI) to address this pressing issue in a segment titled "Dari Asia Barat ke Dapur Kita: Apa Kaitan Krisis Bekalan Global dengan Harga Makanan?"

Key Insights & Reshaping Public Perception

Prof. Shaufique detailed how complex global factors—such as geopolitical tensions, escalating energy and transportation costs, and supply chain bottlenecks—drive local food price inflation. Understanding these multifaceted external pressures helps reshape public perception, shifting the narrative from domestic policy misunderstandings to a broader global economic context.

Ensuring National Food Security & Eliminating Concerns

Heavy reliance on imported raw materials frequently raises public anxiety regarding potential food shortages and price instability. However, the discussion emphasized Malaysia's ongoing efforts toward long-term food security. By strategically diversifying import sources, strengthening local production, and building resilient agricultural systems, Malaysia can effectively mitigate supply disruption risks. Addressing these realities directly serves to reassure the public, dispelling fears of basic food deficits while safeguarding the nation's food sovereignty against future global shocks.

GLOBAL EXCELLENCE - INTERNATIONALISATION

Congratulations to Professor Dr. Rozanah Ab. Rahman on her appointment as a Mediator of the Shanghai Commercial Mediation Center (SCMC) for a four-year term, from 25 June 2026 to 24 June 2030.

Professor Dr. Rozanah's appointment comes as SCMC strengthens its global presence through a recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC). The collaboration aims to advance commercial mediation, professional training, institutional cooperation, and cross-border dispute resolution between Malaysia and China.

The MoU was signed by Datuk Danesh Chandran, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of AIAC, and Ms Wei Zhang, Director of SCMC. This appointment reflects Professor Dr. Rozanah's distinguished expertise and international recognition. SBE UPM community is proud of her remarkable achievement and wishes her every success in this international role.

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