

## Bridging Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering Department, UNIMAS with Mazda Japan and Ryobi Ltd through DRB-HICOM's Network



**KUCHING:** The close relation between universities and industries has never depleted in developed countries. In pursuing so that UNIMAS is also in line with that, Dr Mohd Danial Ibrahim (standing second from left) successfully secured an opportunity to serve as a practical engineer at DRB-HICOM for his industrial attachment. The industrial attachment is a requirement for Professional Interview preparation upon getting his Ir status for academicians. With that given opportunity, Dr Danial managed to gain the trust of HICOM Diecasting's CEO, Mr Ainol Azmil Abu Bakar and Casting Engineering Department's Deputy Manager, Mr Rosli Mohamad, to assist HICOM Diecastings in securing the ties between Mazda Japan and the company. The project is to supply Mazda Japan their bracket assy that is supporting the drive shaft to the engine, a part that is vital in holding the part in place during power transmission from differential gear to tyres of a vehicle. HICOM Diecastings Sdn. Bhd. is a subsidiary of DRB-HICOM Berhad., one of Malaysia's giant corporation in automotive industry.

In the recent trip to Mazda Japan's plant in Hiroshima and Houfu, Japan, which was fully financially supported by DRB-HICOM, Dr Danial was exposed to the process of technical visit named, "Bracket Assy Shaft Mass Readiness (MPR) and Pre-production (PP) Evaluation Meeting and Trial". The visit was largely divided into two teams, one team to Ryobi Limited (one of the leading die casting companies worldwide), and the other team to Mazda Headquarters Plant located in Hiroshima Prefecture, and Mazda Houfu Plant located in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Houfu Plant is about 2 hours ride from Hiroshima Prefecture on a Japanese bullet train, Shinkansen. The first team to Ryobi consists of Head of Mould Engineering Department, Mr Khairuddin Ibrahim and Casting Engineering Department Engineer, Mr Mohd Khairul Anwar Abdul Aziz (inset picture). The second team to Mazda Hiroshima Plant and Houfu Plant consisting of the Project Manager, Mr Nanthakumaran a/l Muniandy, Assistant Manager of Sales and Development, Mr

Ahmad Zuhairy Muhammad, Manager of Quality Management Department, Mr Mohd Helmi Roslan and Dr Danial himself. As an academicians who is lacking in industrial experience, the trip gave exposures to Dr Danial the complicated stages of processes involved starting from initial negotiations between two companies until the process of mass production of a product. It covers broadly from technicality to business point of view. The contract was successfully tied between Mazda Japan and HICOM despite the fact that this is the first time Mazda Japan tried to rely 100% on made in Malaysia parts. The tied contract between HICOM and Mazda Japan also proved that Malaysian brand are being trusted worldwide. Apart from Mazda, HICOM has a trustworthy history of providing automotive parts for companies such as Ford, Nissan NSK, Triumph, Kawasaki, and Honda. For non-automotive parts, HICOM also provides products to companies such as HekaDental, White Rodgers, Allweiler and Panasonic. Through the available network between HICOM and UNIMAS, Dr Danial succeeded in providing some platform to bridge these two organizations into a further stage, where it has been confirmed that one of Dr Danial's student is coming to HICOM Diecastings to join the research and development team. The team is scheduled to find solutions, numerically and/or experimentally, in troubleshooting problems available throughout die casting processes. It is also hoped that towards mutual benefits, more collaborative research will continue to be enhanced between these two bodies in the near future.

**By**

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