

## Report from AISAM 2005

*'An excellent way of learning and an opportunity to meet people from a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. The interaction in the group provided a wonderful learning opportunity and enabled knowledge and experience sharing.'* (Ann O'Gorman-Skarratts, AISAM 2005)

Forty-one students from six universities shared a wonderful experience in Penang from July 4 to July 15 this year. Students from Australia, North America, Europe, Asia and Africa were overwhelmingly positive in their feedback on this year's AISAM program.

AISAM (the Asian Intensive School for Advanced Management) was being held for the tenth time. Again Penang was chosen as the location for this year's AISAM experience. Penang has one of the most developed Free Industrial Zones (FIZ) in Asia. Approximately 750 multi-nationals operate in the FIZ. AISAM 2005 students visited selected multinationals on two occasions as part of this year's AISAM program. Penang is also one of the most multi-cultural states in any Asian nation. All of the major religions are represented and reside side by side in harmony. Students also enjoyed luxury accommodation at the Hotel Equatorial Penang and appreciated the facilities offered by INTI International College during this two-week academic program.

The Penang State Minister for Education, YB Dato Dr. Toh Kin Woon opened this year's AISAM program with an insightful and revealing analysis of the economic, social and political environment of Penang and Malaysia. Students studying the unit offered during the first week of AISAM "Business in Asia" had the added benefit of visits to the Penang Development Corporation and selected technology companies in the FIZ - Eng Teknologi, Osram Opto Semi-Conductor and Penang Seagate Industries. A highlight of the "Business in Asia" week was an address by Dr Mahani Zainal Abidin, a Specialist Consultant on Globalisation and Member of the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia. Dr Mahani offered students an excellent explanation of the historical development of commerce throughout Asia and the reasons for it.

After submitting their assignments for Business in Asia at 12:00 noon on Saturday, students enjoyed the delights of Penang for the rest of the weekend. Cafes, bars, markets, shopping centres, island tours and all the other features of this holiday resort were enjoyed by all.

Back to work Monday and students commenced their chosen elective. The very popular electives from AISAM 2004 were offered again at AISAM 2005:

- International Supply Chain Management
- Knowledge Management: the Asia-Pacific Perspective, and
- Strategic Negotiation for International Business

Without exception students said they thoroughly enjoyed their elective and gained hugely from it. The most common regret was that they only had the opportunity to complete one elective!

An added feature of AISAM 2005 was visits by students to firms relevant to their elective choice. Knowledge Management students visited Motorola, Supply Chain Management students visited DHL and Strategic Negotiation students visited MEI Project Engineers.

AISAM 2005 was hard work but it was also fun. Early in the program students enjoyed a "Meet and Greet" evening in the Blue Moon Lounge, and a pool-side barbeque. These events enabled everybody to know everybody. The Penang Tourism Authority again provided AISAM 2005 participants with a State Dinner at the

top of KOMTAR Tower, providing a 360 degree view of Georgetown, Penang's capital. Keeping with tradition, an evening of merriment and good cheer completed the AISAM 2005 program at Bukit Jambul Country Club.

*'Very well organised and an extremely valuable experience. I have recommended this program to other students and will continue to do so.'* (Colin Boldra, AISAM 2005)