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ANNUAL TRAINERS' RETREAT (ATR) REPORT

Exposure & Learning Visit to
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

12–17 December 2025



INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Human Resource Development Network (HRDN), Pakistan's largest national network working in the field of human resource development, organized its 24th international exposure and learning visit to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 12–17 December 2025. The visit was designed as a structured learning experience combining policy engagement, institutional dialogue, and experiential exposure to globally recognized development models, with a particular focus on Islamic and Muslim-Friendly Tourism.



The delegation comprised senior professionals, board members, and practitioners representing rural development, conservation, social protection, training, and research organizations. This diversity enriched collective learning, enabled cross-sectoral reflections, and strengthened peer learning throughout the visit.

ENGAGEMENT SESSION AT THE ISLAMIC TOURISM CENTRE (ITC)



The formal engagement session at the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC) commenced with opening remarks by Ms. Robeela Bangash, Chief Executive Officer, Human Resource Development Network (HRDN). In her welcome address, she thanked the Islamic Tourism Centre for hosting the delegation and facilitating a meaningful knowledge exchange. She briefly introduced HRDN's national mandate, its 26-year institutional journey, and the objectives of the visit. She also presented Pakistan's vast tourism potential, highlighting its rich Islamic heritage, Gandhara and Buddhist civilization sites, cultural diversity, and the critical role of structured human resource development in unlocking this potential.



Dr. Amran Hamza, Professor of Tourism and a senior resource person associated with Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), addressed the delegation. Dr. Hamza shared strategic perspectives on tourism planning, conservation, and the role of human capital in developing sustainable tourism destinations. Drawing from his extensive regional and international experience, he emphasized that tourism success is closely linked with skilled human resources, ethical planning, and a long-term policy vision.



Dr. Hamza subsequently invited Ms. Anis Rozalina Ramil, Senior Manager, Corporate Communication Unit, Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), to deliver the formal presentation on Malaysia's Islamic and Muslim-Friendly Tourism framework. In her comprehensive presentation, Ms. Ramil outlined ITC's institutional mandate, evolution, and key functions, including research and knowledge building, training and capacity development, industry engagement, consultancy services, and standards development. She explained how Malaysia has positioned Islamic tourism as a values-based and inclusive model that emphasizes dignity, safety, cleanliness, and respect for diverse cultures and faiths.

Ms. Ramil further elaborated on Muslim-Friendly Tourism and Hospitality (MFTH), highlighting the role of standards, certification, and workforce training in ensuring service excellence. She shared practical examples of how hotels, travel agencies, and tourism facilities are supported to adopt Muslim-friendly practices, including women- and family-friendly facilities, ethical labor considerations, and community engagement. The presentation provided the delegation with concrete insights into how human resource development is embedded within Malaysia's tourism ecosystem.



Mr. Lee Choon Loong, Co-Founder and President, Discovery Hotel Industry Consultancy, shared his professional experience and industry-oriented perspectives. Mr. Lee focused on the practical dimensions of hospitality management, workforce readiness, and service culture. He oriented the delegation on how tourism and hospitality enterprises translate policy frameworks and standards into day-to-day operations through staff training, leadership development, and customer experience management. His interaction offered valuable insights into aligning human resource strategies with market expectations and sustainability goals.



INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE AND DELEGATION PERSPECTIVES



Following the structured presentations, an interactive discussion was held in which members of the HRDN delegation actively contributed their perspectives, reflections, and inquiries. Mr. Malik Fateh Khan, Chief Executive Officer, GBTI, reflected on the importance of linking tourism development with community-based enterprise models and local economic empowerment.



Mr. Sharif Khan, HRDN Lifetime Member, emphasized the need for institutional coordination and policy coherence to translate tourism potential into sustainable employment outcomes.



Mr. Imran from the Rural Community Development Programme (RCDP) shared operational insights related to community engagement, environmental considerations, and grassroots participation in tourism initiatives. Mr. Babar Qaiser and Ms. Nida from the Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) highlighted the relevance of youth skills development, women's participation, and capacity building in areas surrounding heritage and tourism sites. Ms. Sara Hussain from WWF Pakistan underscored the importance of conservation, responsible tourism practices, and ecological sustainability as integral components of tourism planning.





Ms. Robeela Bangash concluded the session by appreciating the rich and interactive discussion related to the institutionalization of standards, workforce competencies, community-based tourism, women-friendly facilities, and replication potential for Pakistan. She noted that the dialogue reinforced the importance of gradual capacity building, stakeholder ownership, and people-centered approaches in developing sustainable tourism models.

As a gesture of goodwill and cultural exchange, the HRDN delegation presented cultural souvenirs from Pakistan to the hosts at the Islamic Tourism Centre. This symbolic exchange reflected mutual respect, appreciation, and the strengthening of people-to-people and institutional ties. The engagement session concluded with a group photograph, marking the culmination of a productive and cordial interaction.



KUALA LUMPUR CITY EXPLORATION & URBAN LEARNING

Beyond formal engagements, the delegation undertook extensive exploration of Kuala Lumpur to understand urban tourism planning, destination branding, and visitor experience management. Visits to major city landmarks, including the Petronas Twin Towers and surrounding commercial and cultural precincts, provided insights into how iconic structures are integrated within broader urban development strategies.



The delegation observed how Kuala Lumpur combines modern architecture with cultural identity, efficient public transport, pedestrian-friendly spaces, and visitor information systems. These observations highlighted the importance of urban planning, safety, accessibility, and service orientation in enhancing tourist experiences and sustaining city-level tourism economies.

On the first day of the 24th Annual Training and Exposure Visit (ATR), the HRDN delegation began their Kuala Lumpur experience on a vibrant and festive note with an evening visit to Suria KLCC, where the mall was beautifully adorned with Christmas décor, reflecting Malaysia's multicultural harmony and tourism vibrancy. The festive atmosphere set an exciting tone for the delegation, blending leisure with experiential learning in an urban public space designed to engage diverse communities.



The visit then continued to Aquaria KLCC, offering a thrilling and immersive introduction to Malaysia's innovative integration of conservation, education, and tourism. Walking through the iconic underwater tunnel and interactive marine exhibits, participants experienced how environmental awareness is transformed into a captivating public learning journey. The evening marked an energizing start to the delegation's exposure visit, reinforcing HRDN's thematic focus on experiential learning, sustainable tourism, and cross-cultural engagement through thoughtfully designed public spaces.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT GENTING HIGHLANDS

A dedicated visit to Genting Highlands offered exposure to hill tourism and integrated resort development. The delegation observed large-scale hospitality operations, cable car connectivity, leisure attractions, and destination-level workforce deployment. Genting Highlands illustrated how environmental management, infrastructure planning, and human resource systems are aligned to manage high visitor volumes while maintaining service quality.

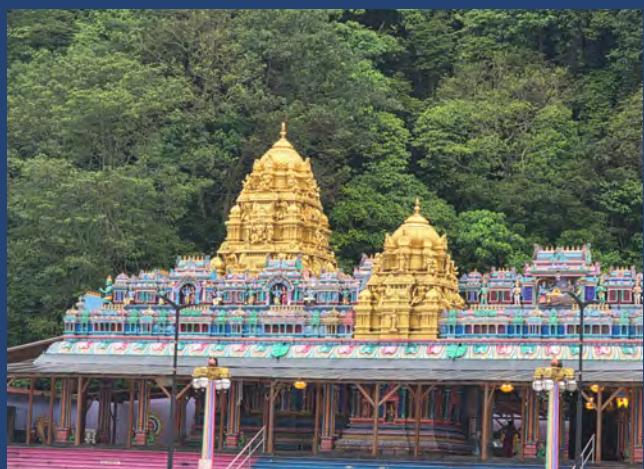


Participants reflected on how similar hill destinations in Pakistan could benefit from structured planning, trained human resources, and integrated tourism services to enhance visitor satisfaction and economic impact.



BATU CAVES

On December 14, 2025, while returning from Genting Highlands, the HRDN delegation made a purposeful stop at Batu Caves, a globally recognized symbol of cultural, spiritual, and heritage tourism in Malaysia. Beyond its religious significance, Batu Caves exemplify how heritage sites can be thoughtfully positioned as major tourism assets—integrated with infrastructure, storytelling, and visitor experience—while preserving their spiritual essence.



The visit prompted reflective dialogue within the delegation on parallel opportunities in Pakistan, particularly the country's rich Buddhist heritage such as Taxila and the Gandhara civilization sites, which hold immense potential for faith-based and cultural tourism. This comparative exposure enriched the 24th ATR learning journey, orienting delegates toward leveraging Pakistan's indigenous heritage for sustainable tourism development, intercultural understanding, and inclusive economic growth.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT SUNWAY LAGOON

The visit to Sunway Lagoon provided insights into world-class theme park operations, safety management systems, customer experience design, and youth employment opportunities. The delegation observed how recreation, wildlife attractions, water-based activities, and entertainment are integrated within a single destination supported by trained staff and standard operating procedures.

This exposure reinforced learning on service excellence, staff training, risk management, and visitor engagement at scale, with relevance for emerging leisure and family-oriented tourism initiatives in Pakistan.





FESTIVE SEASON OBSERVATIONS AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

The visit coincided with the festive Christmas season, allowing the delegation to experience Kuala Lumpur's illuminated streets, festive décor, shopping precincts, and public celebrations. These observations provided insights into how seasonal festivities contribute to tourism promotion, city branding, and economic vibrancy, while creating inclusive public spaces that attract both residents and visitors.



KEY LEARNINGS AND WAY FORWARD

The visit underscored that Islamic and Muslim-Friendly Tourism is fundamentally a human-centered development model. Standards, skills, ethics, and service culture are central to its success. The exposure opened pathways for HRDN to engage in future policy dialogue, skills development initiatives, curriculum support, and pilot projects related to tourism and hospitality in Pakistan, particularly in heritage- and community-based tourism contexts.

CONCLUSION

The 24th ATR visit to Kuala Lumpur proved to be a highly enriching learning experience for HRDN and its members. Engagement with the Islamic Tourism Centre and exposure to Malaysia's tourism ecosystem provided practical, policy-relevant insights with strong applicability to Pakistan's development context.

HRDN remains committed to leveraging such learning engagements to inform policy dialogue, strengthen institutional capacities, and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in Pakistan.



PICTURE GALLERY



AGENDA



AGENDA & ITINERARY

24TH ATR 2025 KUALA LUMPUR MALAYSIA

Dates: 12 – 17 December 2025

Learning and networking, exposure to Malaysian development models and culture

12 DECEMBER – DEPARTURE

Airline: Batik Air (Boeing 737-8)

Flight Departure: 16:30 from Lahore



DAY 1 – 13 DECEMBER: ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

- Arrival at Kuala Lumpur International Airport – 01:15 (Terminal 1)
- Transfer to hotel for check-in
- Lunch
- Rest & evening walk nearby
- Overnight at hotel



DAY 2 – 14 DECEMBER: GENTING HIGHLANDS & BATU CAVES

- Breakfast at hotel
- Full-day Genting Highlands tour
- Two-way cable car ride
- Photo stop at Batu Caves (30 min)
- Lunch
- Return to Kuala Lumpur
- Overnight at hotel



DAY 3 – 15 DECEMBER: SUNWAY LAGOON THEME PARK

- Breakfast at hotel
- Full day at Sunway Lagoon
- Lunch
- Return to hotel
- Overnight at hotel



DAY 4 – 16 DECEMBER: VISITS & CITY TOUR

- Breakfast at hotel
- Full-day city sightseeing tour
 - Petronas Twin Towers (external)
 - Sultan Abdul Samad Building
 - KL Railway Station
 - Shopping
- Lunch included
- Return to hotel
- Overnight at hotel



DAY 5 – 17 DECEMBER: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast at hotel
- Check-out from hotel
- Transfer to airport
- Departure: 12:30 from Terminal 1

TRAVEL ADVISORY



GENERAL CLIMATE (12–17 DEC)

- Kuala Lumpur: Hot, humid, 24°C – 32°C
- Genting Highlands: Cooler, 23°C – 25°C (day), 18°C – 22°C (night)
- Expect rainfall or occasional showers

CLOTHING & PACKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Light, breathable clothes (cotton/linen)
- Light jacket/sweater for Genting Highlands
- Rain protection (raincoat/poncho/umbrella)
- Comfortable walking shoes (sneakers preferred)
- Layered clothing options
- Personal medicines

ENGAGEMENT SESSION

PARTICIPANTS' LIST

| ENGAGEMENT SESSION WITH HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (HRDN) FROM PAKISTAN 16 DECEMBER 2025 | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--|----------------------|
| NO. | NAME | ORGANISATION | DESIGNATION |
| 1. | Puan Nur Awanis Helmee | Tourism Malaysia | Assistant Director |
| 2. | Mdm. Robeela Bangash | Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) | CEO |
| 3. | Mr. Muhammad Sharif Khan | Ghazi Barotha Traqiatli Idara (GBTI) | Board Member |
| 4. | Mr. Malik Fateh Khan | Ghazi Barotha Traqiatli Idara (GBTI) | CEO |
| 5. | Mr. Ghazala Siddiqiae | Ghazi Barotha Traqiatli Idara (GBTI) | Board Member |
| 6. | Mdm. Sara Mahmood | World Wide Fund - Pakistan (WWF) | Manager |
| 7. | Mr. Syed Jalaluddin | Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) | Manager |
| 8. | Mr. Hassnain AR. | Institute of Rural Management (IRM) | Manager |
| 9. | Mr. Bilal Azhar | Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) | IT Department |
| 10. | Mr. Sohail Akhtar | Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) | Member of HRDN |
| 11. | Mr. Muhammad Imran | Rural Community Development Programme (RCDP) | Head of accountants |
| 12. | Mrs. Babar Qaisar Qureshi | Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) | Manager |
| 13. | Mdm. Nida Khalid | Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) | Manager |
| 14. | Mr. Nedam Yunus | Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) | Training Coordinator |
| 15. | Mr. Shahid | Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) | Engineer |

| ENGAGEMENT SESSION WITH HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK (HRDN) FROM PAKISTAN 16 DECEMBER 2025 | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| NO. | NAME | ORGANISATION | DESIGNATION |
| 16. | En. Mohamad Afif | Islamic Tourism Centre | Executive Apprentice |
| 17. | Cik Izleen Farhanah Husain | Islamic Tourism Centre | Executive Apprentice |
| 18. | En. Othman Mazlan | Islamic Tourism Centre | Assistant Executive |
| 19. | Cik Alya Batrisvia Mohamad Fajair | Islamic Tourism Centre | Executive Apprentice |
| 20. | Puan Siti Umairah Jaafar | Islamic Tourism Centre | Assistant Executive |
| 21. | Cik Ainaa IzzatiNazri | Islamic Tourism Centre | Executive |
| 22. | En. Wan Riqz Aisy Wan Rusdi | Islamic Tourism Centre | Assistant Executive |
| 23. | Cik Nur Nasuha Zaini | Islamic Tourism Centre | Executive Apprentice |
| 24. | Puan Siti Sarah Hussin | Islamic Tourism Centre | Manager |
| 25. | Puan Anis Rozalina Ramli | Islamic Tourism Centre | Senior Manager |
| 26. | Prof Amran Hamzah | Tourism Planning Research Group | Lecturer |
| 27. | Mr Lee Choon Loong | Tourism Planning Research Group | Secretariat |
| 28. | Mrs Yvonne | Tourism Planning Research Group | Secretariat |



HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



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