



Joinin Jabil, student of AeU in Bachelor of Education programme.

Reaching out for the unreachable

THE road for teachers to get to upgrade themselves academically is often arduous, but few can compare to teachers in remote areas who have to travel long distances to obtain a degree.

Unlike their urban or even rural counterparts, these professionals teach in primary schools that are inaccessible by road.

One such teacher is Cikgu Joinin Jabil who serves as Senior Assistant at Sekolah Kebangsaan Magandai, Sabah.

He is pursuing the Bachelor of Education (Teaching Bahasa Melayu) at the School of Education & Cognitive Science, Asia e University (AeU).

The programme adopts a blended approach in which students are provided with all learning materials online and attend face-to-face tutorials once a month at a nearby learning centre during weekends.

For Joinin, aged 42, the nearest learning centre is at Kota Marudu. According to him, it depends on the season. During the dry season, he uses a motorbike which will involve crossing a river using a make-shift raft.

“At certain points I have to push the motorbike because the hill slopes are too steep and the journey takes me about 4 hours”, said Joinin. Occasionally, there are 4-wheel drives plying the route but they cost as much as RM 950 per trip which is exorbitant.

During the rainy season, the motorbike path can sometimes become a river.

In addition, the path becomes slippery and muddy which makes using the motorbike impossible.

At the Kota Marudu learning centre, Joinin attends classes, downloads learning materials, watches video clips, uploads assignments, surfs the web and discusses online with coursemates.

Currently in the final stages of his programme, Joinin is excited about the prospect of graduating in 2016.

Based on his CGPA thus far, he is among the top 10 per cent in an enrolment of 900 students pursuing the bachelors programme.

He attributes his success to his tutors and the support of his wife and four children.