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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MALAYSIAN STUDENTS COMPETE FOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONS TO REPRESENT MALAYSIA AT WORLD ROBOT OLYMPIAD 2019 IN HUNGARY.

ALOR SETAR, KEDAH, 23 September 2019 – The word “robot” comes from the Czech word “robota” which means “forced work” or “labour”. Today, the word “robot” is used to mean any man-made machine that can perform actions automatically that is normally performed by humans. In the present day, the world has seen the application of robotics in medicine, space exploration, education and more.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the National Robotics Competition (NRC), a hands-on and experiential learning platform organised by Sasbadi Holdings and the Ministry of Education Malaysia since 2005 to nurture young minds in the field of robotics and promote interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education. **After a rigorous series of state level competitions across 13 states and 3 federal territories that were held between July to early September, more than 300 state winning teams came together to compete in the national level competition from 21st to 23rd September at Stadium Sultan Abdul Halim, Alor Setar, Kedah.**

This year’s theme, **Smart Cities**, challenges students to understand the role that Internet of Things (IoT) plays in smart city operations. By grasping the concept of how different physical devices in the cities connect to each other and exchange data, students are then challenged to use their critical thinking, creativity and problem solving skills to develop robotic solutions to improve energy saving, traffic and public transport systems in smart cities.

At the closing ceremony officiated by **Yang Berhormat Dato’ Ir. Zamri bin Yusof, Kedah State Executive Council Member, Chairman of Public Works, Water Resources and Energy** representing **Yang Amat Berhormat Dato’ Seri Haji Mukhriz Tun Mahathir, Kedah Menteri Besar**, he said, *“As mentioned in the Minister of Education Mandate 2019 earlier this year, Science should not be perceived as only a subject to be studied for examinations. Instead, it should be promoted as a way of life. As such, the NRC is not just a robotics competition that is exclusive for Science stream students*

but it should be a platform for every student to obtain the necessary skills in the 21st century in a hands-on and fun manner.”

Echoing his words is **Group Managing Director of Sasbadi Holdings Berhad, Mr. Law King Hui**, *“With the rise of automation brought by Industry Revolution 4.0, soft skills are what define us as humans. According to the Future of Jobs Report 2018 by World Economic Forum, “Human” skills such as creativity, originality, critical thinking, persuasion and negotiation will increase in their value. So will attention to detail, resilience, flexibility and complex problem-solving. Emotional intelligence, leadership and social influence as well as service orientation are also set to see increase in demand in the next 3 years. And I believe that the NRC platform provides every participant the opportunity to harness these valuable skills for a future workforce.”*

Each team participated in one of six categories: **Regular Pro**, **Regular Rookie** (teams who are participating in NRC for the first time), **Open**, **WeDo Regular**, **NRC Football** or **STEM Invention & Innovation**. In the Regular Pro and Rookie category, Primary School students (7 to 12 years old) are challenged to build and programme a self-driving taxi; Lower Secondary students (13 to 15 years old) focus on smart lightings; and Upper Secondary students (16 to 19 years old) are challenged to create and programme a robot that installs new wireless node devices. The teams are evaluated in terms of practicality and creativity in using LEGO® MINDSTORMS® technology on a table-top playing field.

In the Open category (opened to Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary School students), teams are challenged to create robotics solutions in the areas of governance, the workplace and education, then present their project to a group of judges.

In a new category introduced last year, WeDo Regular category requires teams from 7 to 9 years old to program the journey of a driverless school bus with LEGO® Education WeDo 2.0. The NRC Football category is a robotics football challenge whereby teams programmed 2 autonomous robots (1 goalkeeper and 1 shooter) and competed against each other. Last but not least, students from 10 to 14 years old in the STEM Invention & Innovation category are challenged to build a motorised machine to climb and get a ball at the top of a pole.

This year’s competition saw more than 1,000 students participated to compete for the prized reward with a total of RM100,400 worth of cash vouchers for LEGO® Education robotic sets. The winning teams also have the honour to represent Malaysia at the 16th World Robot Olympiad 2019 at Győr, Hungary on 8th to 10th November 2019 to compete against other winning teams across more than 60 countries. For more information about the competition, please visit <http://nrc.sasbadi.com>.

ABOUT THE ORGANISER - SASBADI HOLDINGS BERHAD

Sasbadi Holdings Berhad is a Malaysian-listed company that specialises in providing education solutions. Founded in 1985, the company has grown over the years from producing quality educational books and materials to a leading education solutions provider through its diverse offerings. This includes academic and non-academic educational materials, digital and technology-enabled products, applied learning tools, and a network marketing business.

The Group anchors its business on five core pillars, namely Creating Contents, Developing Technologies, Nurturing Skills, Enriching Life and Forging Connections. Recognising the importance of 21st Century learning, Sasbadi has been championing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and working closely with key partners such as the Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia and Lego Education through robotics for schools. For more information, please visit <http://www.sasbadiholdings.com/>.

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