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ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
MALAYSIA

Curriculum Vitae

Datuk Seri Lim Chong Keat has had an active career as an Architect and Urban Planner in the firms he founded: Malayan Architects Copartnership and Architects Team 3/Jurubena Bertiga. Even before retiring from professional practice in 1995, he has over the last twenty years been dedicating himself to Botanical Research and Plant Conservation, with a special interest in Palms and Gingers, and other native flora of Malaysia.

He was born in Penang in 1930, studied at the Penang Free School, with professional degrees from the University of Manchester (B.A. Hons Arch, first class) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.Arch.); he won several awards including the Heywood Medal, Rome Scholarship Finallist and the Commonwealth Fund (now Harkness) Fellowship. He helped to establish the first school of Architecture in Singapore and was President of the Singapore Institute of Architects, also serving on several public boards including the Singapore Housing & Development Board and the UN Panel for State & City Planning, and in Malaysia: the National Art Gallery, Penang Museum and other public committees. He was the founder chairman of the Architects Regional Council Asia, and Chairman of the Commonwealth Association of Architects Board of Education. In 1995, he was appointed as a Visiting Professor at the University of Manchester, and also as Quatercentenary Visiting Fellow to Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In 1997, he was conferred an LL.B. (honoris causa) from the University of Manchester, and the prestigious Gold Medal of the PAM. (Malaysian Institute of Architects).

He maintains an active interest in Architecture and Design, Art, Anthropology, Music and also in the work of his great friend Richard Buckminster Fuller. He has served as the Chairman of the Malaysian Forestry Research & Development Board (FRIM) in 2001-2004, and has taken part and contributed to the findings of many expeditions by the Forestry Department and by the Academy Sciences Malaysia (to Maliau and Lanjak-Entimau).

He began to research in earnest on Malaysian palms and flora c. 1988 with extensively fieldwork under the project Palm Search Malaysia, which was followed by the programme: Saving Endangered Flora, which brought him into the taxing (and arguably protectionist) world of botanical taxonomy and plant conservation. Since 2000, he has funded and published a serious referential journal, *Folia malaysiana*, "A Magazine devoted to Botanical Knowledge, inspired by the Cultural, Environmental & Floristic Heritage of Malaysia and its Neighbours", which has been publishing significant accounts of new species from the region; the journal is now carried by the major botanical institutions worldwide. Lim himself has published accounts of more than 26 new species of palms (including *Areca tunku*, *Iguanura belumensis*, *Pinanga jamariensis*), and more than 35 species of gingers (e.g. *Alpinia mythiana*, *Alpinia suriana*, *Elettariopsis elan*, *Etlingera apus-hang*) and a new endemic genus *Kedhalia* (monotype: *Kedhalia flaviflora*), and latterly, other flora of the genera *Amorphophallus* and *Trichosanthes* - widening his concern for rare or threatened native plants. He has also published in other botanical journals such the *Singapore Gardens' Bulletin* and *Principes* (now *Palms*), the journal of the International Palm Society. He has also presented many lectures on Malaysian flora at seminars organised by the ASM, Forestry Dept, UKM and USM - and also internationally at the International Palm Society Conference, International Zingiberaceae Symposium,

Flora Malesiana Conferences, Indian Association of Angiosperm Taxonomy Conferences, and at Leiden Herbarium and at Huntingdon Gardens.

Apart from gaining an extensive knowledge of the plants he studied in the wild, and of their survival status (which he monitors regularly), he began to establish and fund (modestly) an ex situ conservation garden, to study and propagate the rare and endangered species - and several new taxa yet undescribed. Currently, the Folia malaysiana Research & Conservation Project at Suriana Gardens (in Balik Pulau, Penang) has built up a significant collection of native plants, that may well be unparalleled in Malaysia (and of course worldwide). Concommittantly, Lim has been supporting a group of his Temiar collectors workers, by a cooperative enterprise called "AdanA" for their benefit and advancement, with authentic village housing for them.