

# UMS vice-chancellor hopes Unity Govt's policies will help boost Sabah economy

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Policies that will be formed and implemented by the Unity government are expected to provide the biggest possible opportunities for Sabah's economic sector to grow and boost development in the state.

University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor said this is because Sabah is the second largest state in Malaysia, rich in oil and gas resources, aside from being the country's main oil palm producer.

Kasim, who is also a member of the Sabah Economic Advisory Council, said that exploring the state's natural resources and adding value through continuous efforts will be able to help improve the economy of the local communities which had been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor

"The government has already been formed, now we are focusing on developing the country in general and Sabah in particular, so in this regard we expect the main focus to be on strengthening the economy so that those affected by the impact of Covid-19 can breathe.

"If possible, the government can give more and better opportunities and create wider spaces for entrepreneurs, and

the government's facilities can be channelled as fast as possible to the people," he said to Bernama.

Kasim said all sectors need to have their own strategies to accelerate their growth, adding that in Sabah, the focus is on developing the agricultural sector which has the potential to grow even further, while the tourism sector that was halted a few years ago due to the pandemic should be reopened with monitoring against Covid-19.

He said the state should not be left behind in the country's development since aside from being rich with natural resources, Sabah is also known for the cultural and artistic diversity of its multiracial community.

Meanwhile, Kasim, who was appointed as UMS' seventh deputy chancellor on Oct 3, hopes that UMS can be used as

a reference university in the region, especially in marine science studies due to the state's strategic location.

Additionally, he said, the field of agriculture is also one of UMS' main focuses since it has a Faculty of Sustainable Agriculture in Sandakan, with many agriculture experts as lecturers.

Kasim said that the research carried out by the UMS researchers will help the government, particularly in improving agricultural productivity and at the same time producing world-class human capital.

"Among other things, my aim is to ensure that UMS becomes a leader in innovation," added Kasim, who holds a Master's degree in Economics from Indiana State University, United States. — Bernama