



Kamaruzaman (second left) and Ansary exchanging documents while Dr. Yee (centre) looks on.

# UMS signs MoU with AeU to offer online learning

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) marked another milestone in the academic field with the signing of a MoU with Asia e-University (AeU) here, Tuesday.

"This MoU signifies the expansion of our Online Distance Learning (ODL) programme which was initiated by the Government under the Entry Point Projects (EPP6) that allows various universities in this country to offer e-learning programmes online," said UMS Vice Chancellor, Prof Datuk Dr. Kamaruzaman Ampon during the ceremony.

"We hope to be able to attract more students especially international students here, consistent with the national agenda to promote Malaysia as a regional educational hub," he said.

He explained that the EPP6 is part of the national key economic areas under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

"We welcome the MoU with AeU, as they have been commissioned by the Government to promote ODL through collaborations with higher institutions of learning in the nation.

"It is under this initiative, that every institute of higher learning is required to identify and develop two ODL programmes by the end of this year."

He said currently, UMS offers two post-graduate Masters programmes as ODL programmes under the EPP6, namely, Master of Human Capital Management and Master in Education Management.

"We plan to offer more programmes via ODL with AeU in the near future," he said.

Meanwhile, President of Asia e-University, Dato Dr Ansary Ahmed said by putting this project forward and collaborating with public institutions, they can show to the world that local institutions have quality as good if not better than international institutions.

"Don't forget when you go international,

you have to compete with other giant international institutions which offer similar programmes, it's a borderless world.

"Technology today has become so advanced that you could learn anywhere with no barriers in learning. We are bringing down barriers and increasing access not just for the international community but also for our local students."

He added that Malaysia is now the tenth most popular learning destination for foreign students, with about 85,000 foreign students in the country to date.

"Previously Malaysia was relying on foreign programmes coming and landing in Malaysia but currently under the ETP, we are taking Malaysian programmes out to the world as well.

"We hope to have another 100,050 students online and another 100,000 students landing in Malaysia, which will make us the fifth most popular learning destination among foreign students by 2020.

"Under the ETP we plan to have at least 3,000 students by end of this year. We currently have 1,500 students.

"With UMS we hope to get the programme up and running as soon as possible, latest by January 2012."

Deputy Chief Minister, Datuk Dr Yee Moh Chai who graced the MoU signing said it was very significant.

"From the State government point of view this provides another avenue for our students to train.

"We need to have proper human resource development to ensure our country moves forward. And this is another channel for the people in Sabah to take advantage of."

He urged local students to be trained and better equipped to meet the challenge of living in this era, both in terms of learning and all other challenges that they might face when they start work.