



Mohd Noh (second left) presents a souvenir to Sufri, who represented chairman of the UTHM Board of Directors.



Baharuddin (left) and Roselina signing the MoU, witnessed by (from 2nd left): Mohd Noh, Sufri and KY Mustafa.

UMS Link, UTHM working to spur economic growth

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KOTA KINABALU: UMS Link Holdings Sdn. Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Universiti Tun Hussein Malaysia (UTHM) Holdings Sdn. Bhd have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to cooperate in pursuing academic excellence and economic development in the country and the South East Asian region.

The two institutions hope to achieve this objective by synergising their existing strengths and resources, Vice Chancellor of UTHM, Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohd Noh Dalimin said.

He said UTHM was strong in the field of research especially in computer science and engineering whereas ULink's strength was in social science and pure sciences such as marine and biology.

"The cooperation came about after having reviewed all existing universities in Malaysia. We found that

both UTHM dan UMS have their respective strengths, which can be synergised to achieve greater economic growth for the country," he added.

Mohd Noh said this in an exclusive interview with *New Sabah Times* recently concerning the MoU between UTHM Holdings Sdn. Bhd. and UMS Link Holdings which was signed in Batu Pahat, Johor in Oct 29 last year.

Mohd Noh together with his team was in Kota Kinabalu on a working visit as a follow-up on the MoU signing.

During the MoU signing ceremony, UTHM Holdings was represented by its managing director, Dr. Baharuddin Mohamed while UMS Link Holdings was represented by its group managing director, Prof. Dr. Roselina Ahmad Saufi. The ceremony was witnessed by UTHM board member, Dato' Sri Sufri Haji Mohd Zin and UMS Link Holdings chairman, Datuk K.Y. Mustafa.

Also present was Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohd Noh Dalimin, vice chancellor

of UTHM.

Mohd Noh said both institutions could leverage on each other's strengths and potentials.

"For example, UTHM could learn from UMS which is far ahead in its ability to attract foreign students while UTHM could offer more places for Sabah students in the field of engineering, so that there would be a wider spread of UTHM graduates," he said.

On planning, Roselina noted the ULink's programmes were more focused on management and soft skills while those of UTHM were on technical and engineering.

"We want to combine our strengths to develop the Master's degree programmes in Business Administration and Human Capital Management through collaboration of the business faculties of both universities," said Roselina.

"This is because the Master's degree programme in Human Capital Management is only offered by UMS and its programme contents are different from the Master's degree programme in Human Re-

source Management," she said.

Roselina also hoped that through the MoU, a company administrative system could be developed to handle various aspects such as governance, IT, audit and risk management as most companies owned by universities do not have a sound administrative system.

"I hope that through the MoU we can pool our resources together to develop the university's business entity we need to increase our revenue so as to contribute to our society and nation as a whole.

"We need to strike a balance between achieving educational excellence and attracting more funding to the university," she said.

Meanwhile, Mohd Noh said it was important for a university's company to be able to generate income and also carry out its social responsibilities.

"With income being generated to the university, the government hopes to reduce its allocation to the university in the future. Currently, most of the universities depend 90

per cent of their funding on the government while only about 10 per cent are able to meet their needs through the collection of tuition fees.

"A university does not have any operating expenditure to carry out its social responsibility role but this responsibility can be undertaken by the university's company," he added.

He was confident that the co-operation would open up more opportunities for the two universities to optimise their business ventures.

"According to the Auditor General's Report presented in the Parliament, UTHM Holdings and UMS Link Holdings are among companies of Public Higher Institutions of Learning (IPTA) which have been making profits since they were established.

"Thus, there must be a successful recipe that we can share together," Mohd Noh quipped while explaining that the Auditor General's Report covered all university companies including those established as government statutory bodies.