



Musa exchanging documents on joint cooperation with Abu Hassan while Yong looks on.

UMS to offer off campus degrees next year

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) will introduce a degree-level distant learning programme when it moves into its permanent campus in Menggatal next year.

UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr Abu Hassan Othman said Thursday several courses would be offered under the programme with emphasis on technology science, business, social science and communications.

"We cannot offer the programme now because the temporary campus at Likas lacks facilities," he said after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Sabah Foundation and UMS.

Abu Hassan signed for UMS while Sabah Foundation by its Director Datuk Musa Aman. It was witnessed by Chief Minister Datuk Yong Teck Lee.

Under the five-year MoU, the Foundation and UMS have agreed to embark on joint cooperation into research, publication, training and development in the fields of social, education, natural sciences and commercial activities.

Abu Hassan said UMS now had 687 students and teaching staff of 70. It would take in another 725 students and the number is expected to increase to 5,000 by the year 2000.

Meanwhile, Musa said the Foundation has allocated RM14 million for scholarships, bursaries, study grants and loans for the 1997/98 academic year.

He said the figure is an increase of 20 per cent over the amount allocated in 1996/97.

He said the Foundation was able to increase the allocation due to the improved performance of its subsidiary companies like Sinora Sdn Bhd.

"We hope to maintain this trend through continued prudent fiscal and administrative management," he said.

Priority would be given to science stream courses like medicine, dentistry, Pharmaceutical science, fisheries, shipping and education.

Courses on information technology would also be given consideration.

He said preference in the award of scholarships would be given to students taking up courses in Sabah, Sarawak and the Peninsula.

"We will also consider study loans for those taking up courses not on our priority list, provided they can convince us of the employment value of such qualifications," he said. — ALEX ONG

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