

DAILY EXPRESS NEWS

Govt facilities to help train UMS medical students

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Kota Kinabalu: The need to develop the health and medical field is crucial to furthering the growth of the State's socio-economy.

In doing so, more medical personnel need to be trained for service in the State as more hospitals and clinics are set up all over the State.

"Our country still needs more doctors and specialists in various fields of medicine," said Chief Minister Datuk Musa Haji Aman.

He expressed this in his speech read by Infrastructure Development Minister Datuk Yahya Hussin at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and the Health Ministry, here Friday.

Musa said issues of education in the community were closely linked with community health issues. "If our people here in Sabah have low health standards and well-being, the effects can be seen also in their education," he said.

Therefore, he said the Government was expediting the setting up of a medical school in the university to indirectly help raise the standard of awareness and importance given to health in the community.

"In this respect, the State Government will continue to work closely together in helping to achieve this mission," he said.

He noted that nine-year-old UMS is a significant institution in the development of the State.

The MoU provides the university with government hospitals and clinics such as Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Likas Specialist Hospital, formerly the Sabah Medical Centre for medical training.

The MoU, to run for ten years, gives the 32 medical students of UMS opportunities for practical training leading to their medical degrees in various aspects of medicine.

UMS Vice-Chancellor, Tan Sri Professor Dr Abu Hassan Othman, said the MoU was simply an important gateway to furthering the medical faculty's mission to produce quality medical personnel in the State.

"We're confident that the students we're going to produce are of high quality and comparable to other medical graduates from other local universities and foreign ones as well," he said.

Hassan also pointed to the significance of the MoU as it gives the students clinical training even in their first year of their degree.

"They have to go for five years of training with an integrated programme. The students would do some clinical practice in their year one with exposure in the clinics and hospitals."

He said the first intake of medical students were enrolled with nearly all A's in either their STPM or Matriculation examinations and were admitted based on meritocracy.

"We have very good students in the first batch. The first intake has seven Sabahans. They're just as capable as any other student. At the moment, entry is based on meritocracy.

"And when they finish, we hope they would want to come and serve in Sabah," he said.