

# UMS, UiTM urged to identify needy students

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sabah have been asked to identify less fortunate students in their educational institutions so that they could be given the appropriate assistance.

Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapha Sakmud said his ministry was committed to ensuring that the welfare of students are ensured throughout their studies and was ready to help because 'no student should be left behind'.

"I have received many messages on the challenges faced by some students who are new or are registering at public higher education institutes across the country, and I am aware of this matter.

"One case that really touched my heart is the story of Rafida Zaidin from Sandakan, who

enrolled in UMS, Kota Kinabalu using a gunny sack as her luggage. This shows her tenacity and strength to continue her studies despite being in dire straits," he said in a statement here on Sunday.

Mustapha also reminded students enrolling in universities and colleges to not be shy and instead be open to contacting the Student Affairs Division (HEP) at their respective universities if they required assistance.

"The ministry provides various assistance according to student needs, just identify them and apply, there will definitely be a solution. Continue with the spirit of seeking knowledge, every effort of sacrifice will bear fruit," he added.

The story of Rafida also caught the attention of Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek.

Fadhlina, in a post on her

official Facebook page on Sunday, said she had contacted the student and immediately arranged for financial aid and other necessities to support her studies.

She said Rafida's story touched the hearts of many people.

"I was able to contact her and immediately arrange for financial aid and necessities she needed to continue her studies.

"Rafida is a bright child, hailing from the blessed land of Sandakan.

"Her exam results at Labuan Matriculation College were very impressive, and she is currently pursuing accounting studies at UMS. Why is Rafida's issue so close to my heart? Because on the same day, I also sent my eldest child to university.

"God willing, Rafida does not need to worry about her studies," she said.



Rafida used a sack to carry her belongings when moving into her dormitory during registration at UMS.