

UMS student tells why she used gunny sack

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KOTA KINABALU: The almost seven-hour journey from Sandakan to Kota Kinabalu was the reason for Rafida Zaidin, 19, a student at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to use a gunny sack as an alternative baggage to avoid items from being dropped.

The student majoring in Bachelor of Accounting said that the items she was carrying were quite a lot and made it difficult to move, so her father took a sack in the kitchen and put half of the items in it.

Additionally, the entry requirement that allocates only two bags only allowed when registering for residential college is also the reason why she used sacks to carry buckets, pillows and blankets.

"At first I wanted to bring six bags, but only two bags were allowed so I took the initiative to put half of my stuff in the sack to save space," she said here Tuesday.

Rafida who is one of the 4,450 new students at UMS this session was met by reporters at the New Student Pledge and



Rafida Zaidin

Pledge Ceremony in conjunction with the 30th Session Friendly Adaptation Week 2024/2025 at the Chancellor's Hall, UMS which was officiated by Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor Tuesday.

Rafida explained to reporters that during registration, a member of the UMS team had approached her to confirm whether the sack was hers or if she had taken someone else's by mistake.

"I told them the gunny sack is mine," she recalled.

"They took some pictures and asked why I brought it," she added.

The youngest of two siblings said she did not expect the

pictures taken by the seniors during the registration process, would go viral.

However, she still felt moved and grateful for the concern shown and wanted to use this as a motivation in continuing her studies to help her parents who work as fruit traders in Kampung Sim-Sim, Sandakan.

"At first, I was excited, but now I'm a bit nervous with all the interview requests," said Rafida, an excellent 8A student in the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) and a former student of Labuan Matriculation College.

She feels very grateful to be able to continue her studies in the field of accounting which is her main interest.

"I aspire to become an accountant and hope that I can repay the sacrifices and services my parents had rendered to send me to study until now," she said.

Rafida also commented on the video call she received from Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek recently who gave her RM3,000 in spending money.

She also received a call from another party about her Sabah Government scholarship process which will be accelerated in the near future.

Grateful for the support, Rafida said it would ease her father's financial burden.

Fadhlina, in a post on her official Facebook page on Sunday, said she had contacted Rafida and immediately arranged for financial aid and other necessities to support her studies.

Her story also touched the heart of Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapha Sakmud who 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'.

Mustapha asked UMS and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sabah to identify less fortunate students in their educational institutions so that they could be given the appropriate assistance.