

UMS rejects fee cut, prioritises water facility repairs

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has clarified its position on demands from a student group calling for fee reductions in light of the ongoing water supply issues affecting the campus.

The group, which identifies itself as Suara Mahasiswa (SM), had submitted a formal letter requesting lower fees due to the disruptions.

UMS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Kasim Haji Mansor, said after careful consideration, the university decided that a fee reduction would not be appropriate at this time.

"The amount involved would be better utilised to fund critical



Datuk Dr
Kasim Haji
Mansor

facility repairs, especially water-related infrastructure on campus. Solving the water issue will have a far greater and lasting impact than a temporary reduction in fees," he explained.

Dr Kasim stressed that the decision was made with the long-

term interests of the campus community in mind, as UMS remains committed to ensuring students can study in a more conducive and comfortable environment.

With financial support from the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Finance, UMS has taken a series of proactive steps to address the water supply problem in collaboration with relevant agencies, including the Sabah State Water Department (JANS) and maintenance contractors.

Among the initiatives implemented are the construction of a groundwater treatment system (tubewell),

installation of additional water storage tanks at strategic locations, periodic water delivery to residential colleges via tankers, the purchase and distribution of drinking water to students, and continuous cooperation with JANS to monitor and improve the integrated water supply system.

"These efforts demonstrate the university's commitment to safeguarding student welfare throughout this crisis," Dr Kasim said.

He added that fee and facility management matters fall under the authority of the University Management Committee and the University Board of Directors,

and the issue is being handled directly by UMS with ongoing support from the Ministry of Higher Education.

Dr Kasim also pointed out that UMS tuition fees are already heavily subsidised by the government — more than 90 per cent — leaving students to pay only a minimal amount compared to the actual cost of study.

"Our decision not to offer an additional reduction is consistent with the need to prioritise university funds for facility upgrades that benefit all students," he said, stressing that the Minister of Higher Education should not be blamed in this

matter.

UMS expressed its appreciation for the ministry's attention and assistance in addressing the water supply issue and other initiatives to improve student welfare.

The university also urged all parties to continue cooperating and to channel feedback through proper avenues so that infrastructure repairs can be carried out more effectively for the common good.

"We are confident that with close cooperation between students, management and the ministry, the well-being of the entire campus community can be enhanced," Dr Kasim said.