

UMS postpones convocation to allow students and families to vote

TBP 19.10.2025 P.01

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has decided to postpone the first day of its convocation ceremony to November 30 to allow students, their families, and staff to fulfil their civic duty in the upcoming 17th Sabah State Election (PRN-17), said its Board of Directors chairman, Datuk Seri Panglima Abdul Rahman Dahlan.

He said the decision was made responsibly after the Election Commission (EC) announced November 29 – the date UMS had originally scheduled for the start of its convocation – as polling day for the state election.

“We had set November 29 as the first day of the UMS

convocation without knowing that the EC would also fix that date as polling day,” he said.

“From a legal standpoint, we cannot proceed with an event that could potentially hinder voters from exercising their rights. Imagine students or family members coming from Sandakan or Tawau – it would be unfair to expect them to attend both events on the same day,” he explained.

Abdul Rahman, who was met at the Program Pemerkasaan Wanita dan Seminar Kenegaraan Malaysia Madani Putatan officiated by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi on Saturday, said the four-day convocation was

originally scheduled to begin on November 29.

He said UMS decided to postpone the convocation by one day as a form of compromise to accommodate both the election and the needs of students and their families.

“We feel responsible to move the date to November 30. This gives everyone the chance to vote first and then attend the convocation. At the same time, we are aware that many families have already made travel arrangements or bought tickets, so we only postponed it by one day as a practical solution,” said Abdul Rahman.

● [Turn to Page 2, Col 5](#)

Abdul Rahman: Decision made in good faith

TBP 19.10.2025 P.02

● From Page 1

He acknowledged that some had criticised UMS online, accusing the university of prioritising the election over the convocation, but said the decision was made in good faith and with respect for the democratic process.

“There were some negative comments suggesting that postponing the convocation for the election was unfair, especially since there are students from Peninsular Malaysia studying here. But it would be awkward for UMS to hold a convocation on polling day. We must give all voters, especially our students and their parents, the opportunity to carry out their responsibility as citizens,” he said.

Abdul Rahman expressed

confidence that the decision would ultimately be understood and appreciated by the UMS community.

“God willing, the change is for the better. Holding the convocation on election day would not feel right. By moving it to November 30, we ensure that our students can graduate with pride after first fulfilling their duty to the nation,” he said.

On Friday, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the convocation will not clash with voting.

Ahmad Zahid stated the Election Commission considered all relevant factors before setting the election date. He confirmed university halls will not be used as polling stations and the schedule accommodates the upcoming Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia exams starting November 3.