



Mustapha (back row, eighth left) presenting award to winners after handing over acknowledgements to strategic partners of the event.

UMS drives Malaysia MADANI, SMJ aspirations through innovation ecosystem

TBP 23.10.2025 P.06

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) continues to advance the Malaysia MADANI and Sabah Maju Jaya (SMJ) agendas through the development of a high-impact innovation ecosystem that brings together researchers, students, industries and the local community.

This effort underscores UMS's role as a leading university in the Borneo region and was demonstrated through the recent hosting of the Grand Finale Sabah Festival of Ideas (SFOI) and the Excellence in Innovation and Invention Expo (EXCOCIPTA) 2025.

Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Datuk Ts. Mustapa Sakmud, said innovation is the heartbeat of national progress, as it opens doors to new job opportunities, enhances competitiveness and adds value to both state and national economies.

"Malaysia MADANI and SMJ

cannot be realised without innovation. It is the cornerstone of advancement and a catalyst for societal wellbeing and shared prosperity," he said during the closing ceremony, held at UMS recently.

He added that the Ministry of Higher Education remains committed to strengthening the role of universities as centres of excellence in knowledge and innovation, including efforts to commercialise research outputs and ideas developed by local talents.

"With the ongoing efforts of all stakeholders, Sabah has the potential to emerge as a regional innovation hub, not merely as a consumer of technology, but as a creator and exporter of home-grown, innovative solutions to the global market," he said.

Meanwhile, UMS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor, in a speech delivered by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and

Innovation), Professor Ir. Dr Rosalam Sarbatly, expressed gratitude to the Ministry for entrusting UMS with leading the Festival of Ideas at the state level.

He said SFOI and EXCOCIPTA 2025 featured more than 465 innovative products and creative ideas from five key zones in Sabah namely Keningau, Tawau, Sandakan, Kota Marudu and Tuaran.

"These initiatives involved a wide cross-section of society, including school students, researchers and young entrepreneurs. This success is a clear testament that Sabah's innovation ecosystem is firmly on track," he said.

Professor Kasim also reaffirmed UMS's commitment to being a strategic government partner in realising the aspirations of Malaysia MADANI and SMJ, particularly in human capital development, high-impact research and sustainable

innovation.

"With strategic synergy between academia, industry and the community, we can spark a wave of innovation that transforms our economic landscape and redefines the future of national development," he added.

The programme was jointly organised by the Institute for Development Studies Sabah, Sabah Credit Corporation and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Sabah.

It featured various competitions including the invention competition (PEREKA), STEMQuest Ignite Innovation, Local Wisdom Innovation and Student Entrepreneurship Innovation.

The closing ceremony also included the presentation of awards to competition winners and acknowledgements to strategic partners who contributed to the success of the high-impact event.