

UMS unveils 2026 strategic vision 'The Brain of Borneo'

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has launched its 2026 strategic vision themed 'The Brain of Borneo', marking a new phase in the university's transformation as a knowledge institution in soul, integrity and global impact.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor said the vision reflects UMS's commitment to strengthening its position as a centre of scholarly authority in Borneo while expanding its role as a respected strategic partner internationally.

More than three decades after its establishment, he noted that UMS is now advancing with a focused, values-driven and impact-oriented approach aligned with the needs of Sabah and the aspirations of the nation.

Dr Kasim emphasised that The Brain of Borneo is not merely a slogan, but a foundation for work culture, leadership and a shared belonging within the university community.

The BRAIN acronym represents five principal values: Beneficent, delivering tangible societal benefits through knowledge and research; Resilient, ensuring institutional strength and competitiveness; Authentic, reinforcing identity and Bornean wisdom; Inclusive, upholding diversity and equity; and Nurture, fostering sustainable talent and leadership development.

The vision is translated into six strategic thrusts.

Under "Brilliant Talents", UMS prioritises human capital development and future leaders, with 2026 targets including the growth of student start-up companies, expanded micro-credentials and flexible learning pathways, strengthened Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Malaysian Skills Certificate programmes, maintaining student attrition below three per cent, and enhanced



Dr Kasim delivering his keynote address at the launch of UMS's 2026 strategic vision, 'The Brain of Borneo', in Kota Kinabalu.

welfare initiatives such as the Student Kitchen and increased accommodation capacity.

The "Outstanding Academia and Professionals" thrust focuses on strengthening excellence pathways for academics and professionals.

Currently, 107 out of 115 UMS academic programmes retain Full Accreditation, underscoring the university's commitment to quality that meets and exceeds national standards.

Through "Revolutionary Research", UMS advances high-impact research in areas such as planetary health, food security and community development.

Initiatives including EcoFarm, UniMADANI and the Professor at School programme demonstrate efforts to translate research into practical solutions for society.

Through "Notable Visibility", UMS expands knowledge diplomacy via international articulation models, Borneo edutourism mobility and the Borneo Festival of Ideas as a platform for regional and global discourse.

UMS also reinforces integrity under "Exemplary Leadership

and Governance", adopting a zero-tolerance policy against corruption, falsification, fraudulent claims, abuse of power and ethical breaches.

Dr Kasim said integrity is strengthened through the MyWibawa approach, tighter governance monitoring of grants and finances, implementation of ISO 39001, and the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Ready campus based on integrated data governance.

Under "Operational Sustainability", UMS targets a minimum two per cent annual reduction in operational expenditure through Performance-Based Budgeting, supported by income diversification, subsidiary recovery plans and a Sustainability Dashboard.

He added that UMS Hospital is scheduled to commence phased operations beginning April 2026 with outpatient services, integrating clinical education, research and healthcare services.

"The hospital will become a strategic asset for Sabah and contribute to the university's financial sustainability," he said.