

Antarctica research promotes M'sia: CM

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KOTA KINABALU: The Antarctica Research Programme will help build international linkages and at the same time promote Malaysia to the world, particularly in the field of science and technology, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman.

He said Malaysia is a tropical country and geographically distant from Antarctica but the involvement of Malaysian scientists in Antarctica research shows science has no boundaries.

In this respect, hosting of the Malaysian International Seminar on Antarctica (Misa 3) in Sabah was timely and it would provide the right platform for scientists to share ideas and experiences in Antarctica, he said.

It would also give the people the opportunity to be exposed to knowledge and research on the harsh conditions and extreme climate on Antarctica, he added in his speech at the launch of Misa 3 at Le Meridien Hotel, here, Wednesday. His speech was read by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Seri Joseph Pairin Kitingan.

Musa also commended Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for playing a vital role in this initiative, saying the effort taken by UMS and Malaysian Antarctica Research Programme (MARP) was an initial step towards nurturing knowledge among students who are the future generations of the country.

By sharing their invaluable experiences in the Antarctic with the students, Musa said it would surely motivate them to learn and gain knowledge and subsequently be well-rounded individuals.

"Relating stories on Antarctica may even encourage these young

minds to be explorers and adventurers themselves.

"As such, it is my hope UMS will continue to organise events of this nature as part of her globalisation and internationalisation efforts," he said.

Two UMS academicians - Dr Michael Wong of Biotechnology and Research Institute and Prof. Madya Dr Baba Musta of Science and Technology School - who were part of the Antarctica Research Programme, were present at the Misa 3 launch.

Musa also said the UMS programme was also relevant with the State Government's mission to enhance Sabah's international competitiveness through capacity building in science and technology.

He expressed hope that the Sabah Science and Technology Unit would continue to find ways to engage in collaborations of this nature and to ensure that the State is an active participant in the development of science and technology.

In retrospect, he said the Misa 3 was held in conjunction with the International Polar Year 2007-2008, which brings recognition to the State of Sabah. He said it was a good example of close networking between universities, government agencies, the Federal Government, NGOs and international institutions.

"Such an internationally recognised event only makes the Visit Malaysia Year 2007 more meaningful," he said.

Also present were UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr Mohd Noh Dalimin, Vice President of Academy of Science Malaysia Datuk Seri Dr Salleh Mohd Nor, organising chairpersons Prof. Datin Ann Anton and Prof. Datuk Dr Azizan Abu Samah.



Pairin (second right) pressing a device to mark the launching of MISA3 seminar at Le Meridien Hotel on behalf of the Chief Minister yesterday.