

Eight UMS students join academic mission to Russia

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UMS delegation held an academic exchange session at the Higher School of Economics (HSE University) in St. Petersburg.

KOTA KINABALU: Eight students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) recently participated in an academic mission to the Russian Federation to strengthen student diplomacy and enhance exposure in international relations.

The programme, “The Russia Chapter 2026,” organised by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSSK) UMS, involved a delegation of Year 3 International Relations students undertaking official visits to key institutions in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The visits included the Malaysian Embassy in Moscow, The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute, National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE University), ITMO University and Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University).

Faculty Advisor and Head of Delegation, Dr Mohd Ikhrum Mohd Ridzuan, said the programme aimed to provide students with opportunities to build institutional networks while introducing the UMS Model United Nations (MUN) at the global level and strengthening intellectual exchange between Malaysia and Russia.

He said the programme also fostered diplomatic skills, critical thinking and understanding of current geopolitical issues through field-based learning experiences.

Throughout the programme, students presented academic analyses on Malaysia–Russia relations, economic cooperation within the BRICS framework and Russia–China strategic alignment in the energy sector.

He added that the programme was complemented by cultural diplomacy elements through silat and Zapin Johor performances to introduce Malaysian heritage to the international community.

Mohd Ikhrum said the programme marked another milestone in the global engagement of UMS International Relations students following academic missions to Manila in 2024 and Türkiye in 2025.

He said this reflected continued efforts to produce globally minded students with intellectual capability and diplomatic awareness in representing the country.

He also expressed appreciation to all parties involved, including the Malaysian Embassy in Moscow, higher education institutions in Russia and the Russian Culture House in Kuala Lumpur for their support and cooperation.

The eight-student delegation, led by Programme Director Nur Farah Sabrina Hadari, was accompanied by International Relations Programme lecturer Associate Professor Wan Shawaluddin Wan Hassan.