

Benefits of international collaboration for Sabah

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MINISTER of Education, Science and Technology Datuk James Ratib (*pic*) said the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology remains committed to investing in education, research infrastructure, scientific talent and international collaboration to build a knowledge-based economy.

He also encouraged young people to pursue careers in science, engineering, technology and innovation, saying curiosity and continuous learning would be key to Sabah’s future scientific advancement.

Highlighting the broader benefits of international cooperation, James said stronger collaboration would not only strengthen the blue economy but also boost Sabah’s tourism sector.

He noted that about 30 students from Xiamen University had arrived in Sabah and would become informal ambassadors for the State by sharing their experiences with friends and family upon returning to China.

James also welcomed more Chinese students, researchers and investors to Sabah, saying the State is open to collaboration across various sectors beyond marine science.

He expressed confidence that UMS would continue strengthening partnerships with Xiamen University, stressing that knowledge exchange and openness were essential to accelerating scientific progress.

“We exchange minds. Two brains are better than one brain. There are things UMS knows and things Xiamen University knows. If we work together, we can make our ocean better than before,” he said, adding that setting aside differences and embracing collaboration would enable Sabah to move forward more rapidly.

Its President, Wang Ruifang, said the university remains committed to strengthening scientific and educational cooperation between China and Malaysia as it enters its second decade.

“We look forward to deepening our partnerships with the Sabah State Government and stakeholders across society in education, research and innovation. Together, we will explore new opportunities in the blue economy and create lasting benefits for our communities,” she said during the Public Open Day of the Research Vessel Tan Kah Kee here on Thursday.

Wang said the arrival of the RVTKK in Kota Kinabalu marked its first port call in Sabah and reflected the growing cooperation between China and Malaysia in marine science and education.

She said the vessel serves as the flagship platform of the XMU@Sea programme, functioning as a mobile classroom and laboratory to promote marine education, scientific research and public awareness on ocean sustainability.

Following the Open Day, the vessel will sail to Port Klang for a deep-sea scientific expedition involving participants from 13 universities and institutions, including Universiti Malaysia Sabah, the Sabah Fisheries Department, Indonesia’s IPB University and Thailand’s Chulalongkorn University.

Wang said the expedition will allow students and researchers from different countries to conduct marine research, exchange knowledge and strengthen regional cooperation.