

UMS aims to provide accommodation for all students

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Kasim said although the Ministry of Higher Education requires public universities to provide accommodation for at least 70 per cent of students on or near campus, UMS was aiming to house all its students within the campus.

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) aims to provide accommodation for 100 per cent of its students on campus or within close proximity as enrolment continues to grow.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor said UMS currently had on-campus accommodation for only about 8,000 of its 23,000 students, leaving thousands to seek housing outside the campus.

“Another 5,300 new students are expected to enrol in September, while we are also seeing a steady increase in international students, particularly from China,” he said at the memorandum of agreement signing ceremony between UMS and KTI Development Sdn Bhd on Monday.

Kasim said although the Ministry of Higher Education requires public universities to provide accommodation for at least 70 per cent of students on or near campus, UMS was aiming to house all its students within the campus.

He said the development of the university hospital, which is expected to be fully operational next year, would further increase demand for accommodation.

“This facility would require accommodation for about 1,500 nurses alone,” he said, adding that the figure did not include doctors and other medical personnel.

To address the demand, Kasim said UMS was exploring the development of additional student residences, including a proposed on-campus facility using Industrialised Building System (IBS) technology through its partnership with KTI.

He said the proposed development should offer more than accommodation, with facilities such as cafeterias, grocery stores and business centres to create a more comprehensive living environment for students.

“Accommodation is not merely a basic necessity for learning; it also plays an important role in shaping students’ lives and providing a conducive environment throughout their three to five years of study at UMS,” he said.

Kasim said the growing number of international students also strengthened the need for safe and comfortable accommodation. UMS currently has more than 1,000 international students, with numbers expected to increase in the coming years.

He said the partnership with KTI could also be expanded beyond student residences by leveraging the developer’s expertise in property development and project management alongside UMS’s academic capabilities.

The collaboration could create opportunities in infrastructure development, applied research, innovation, expertise sharing, industrial training and projects benefiting students and the wider community, he added.

Kasim said the partnership marked the beginning of a longer-term strategic relationship between UMS and KTI and would strengthen cooperation between academia and industry.

“Let us work together to ensure that every commitment agreed upon is translated into effective implementation and delivers a tangible impact on the development of the university, industry and society,” he said.