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UMS, KTI Development partner to address student accommodation shortage

Borneo Post (KK), Malaysia



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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has formalised a strategic partnership with KTI Development Sdn Bhd to tackle the growing shortage of student accommodation amid rising international enrolment and future expansion plans.

The agreement sets KTI Development act as an off-campus accommodation partner and providing housing at Kayana Heights, which is located about two kilometres from the main campus.

UMS vice chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Mansor said demand for housing has become increasingly urgent, with roughly 10,000 students currently staying off-campus due to the limited on-campus capacity.

"Roughly 40 per cent of students are already living outside, scattered across Kota Kinabalu. Many prefer locations closer to campus, and this site offers that convenience," he said.

He noted that international student numbers are rising sharply, particularly from China, with about 400 third-year students expected to arrive this year alone.

"This figure is projected to reach 2,500 next year, with many currently staying long-term in nearby hotels around One Borneo," he added.

Kasim also highlighted that future developments, including the upcoming UMS teaching



(From left) Wilson, KTI Development chief executive officer Datuk Dr Gordon Loke and Dr Kasim seen during the signing ceremony.

hospital, will further intensify demand for accommodation, with an estimated 1,500 nursing staff expected to require housing.

KTI Development group executive director Wilson Loke said the project aims not just to provide units, but to create a safe, comfortable and well-managed living environment tailored to student needs.

"The units will come with basic furnishings, WiFi connectivity and essential facilities to support both academic life and daily living," he said.

Loke added that the development will comprise

approximately 2,165 units in total, with current construction focused on about 800 units under the first phase.

He emphasised that safety features have been enhanced beyond standard requirements, including higher balcony barriers and controlled window openings, to ensure suitability for families and children.

"We have taken additional steps in design to improve safety standards. At the same time, we recognise that broader well-being must also be addressed through community and support systems," he said.



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SUMMARIES

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