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UMS out to expand biotechnology research partnerships

Borneo Post (KK), Malaysia



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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is strengthening biotechnology research partnerships through the ninth International Biotechnology Symposium (SB9), bringing together researchers, academics, industry representatives and government agencies from Malaysia and abroad.

Themed 'Strengthening a Sustainable Future with Emerging Frontiers in Biotechnology', the symposium also features participants from China and Indonesia.

Sabah Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk James Ratib said biotechnology was not merely a scientific discipline but a strategic economic sector capable of driving the state's long-term development.

"Research should not stop in the laboratory but must be translated into technologies, products and services capable of generating economic value, creating employment opportunities and improving the quality of life of the community," he said.

The text of his speech was read by Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation Jordan Jude Ellron.

Ratib said the Sabah Maju Jaya development agenda would continue to strengthen collaboration between the state government, higher

education institutions, research organisations, industry and relevant agencies to create an environment conducive to innovation.

Meanwhile, UMS vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kasim Hj Mansor said SB9 reflected the university's commitment to positioning biotechnology as an important field in science, innovation and sustainability.

"Biotechnology has become one of the most transformative fields of the 21st century, with applications spanning healthcare, agriculture, food security, environmental conservation, industrial manufacturing, renewable resources and the development of new bioeconomies," he said.

Kasim said Sabah's position on Borneo, an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot, offered significant opportunities for biotechnology research given its diverse terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

He said Sabah's biodiversity, combined with UMS' research capacity through its Institute of Biotechnology (IPB), faculties and research centres, provided a strong foundation for expanding research across various fields.

"These collaborations have enhanced research capacity, encouraged technology transfer and facilitated the translation of scientific discoveries into

innovations that benefit society and the economy," he said.

SB9 2026 also features talks and exhibition booths showcasing biotechnology research, innovations and expertise.

During the symposium, UMS signed two research agreements with Persatuan Pengusaha Bulatok Sabah (PPSB) and Milagros Putra Mandiri, Indonesia.

A letter of intent was also signed with Bio3 Scientific Sdn Bhd to expand collaboration in research, expertise exchange and biotechnology innovation and technology development.

Kasim said platforms such as SB9 were important for bringing together expertise from diverse backgrounds to produce more impactful and relevant research.

He expressed confidence that the presentations, discussions and networking sessions would generate new ideas, encourage collaboration and contribute to scientific advancement and sustainable socio-economic development.

Also present were Sabah Deputy State Secretary (Development) Datuk Dr Ahemad Sade and IPB director Prof Dr Jualang Azlan Abdullah Gansau.



(From left) Kasim and Jordan make a stop at an exhibition booth during the event.



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SUMMARIES

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