



29 SEP, 2026

A recognition for Sabah: CM

Daily Express (KK), Malaysia



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Establishment of WHO zoonotic malaria centre at UMS

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KOTA KINABALU: The establishment of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Zoonotic Malaria at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is a significant milestone for Sabah, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor (pic).

He said the designation recognised UMS' expertise and contributions to malaria research, particularly its work on *Plasmodium knowlesi*.

"It is an achievement that brings recognition not only to UMS, but also to Sabah and Malaysia," he said in his speech when opening the centre at the UMS Chancellery Building Event Gallery, Monday.

His speech was read out by the Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister Datuk Cesar Mandela Malakun.

The Chief Minister said Malaysia has made remarkable progress in malaria control and elimination, including interrupting indigenous transmission of human malaria parasites.

"Yet *Plasmodium knowlesi* presents a different challenge. Its transmission involves a complex interaction among humans, macaques, mosquitoes and the environment.

"This challenge is especially relevant to Sabah. Our rich biodiversity and the close interaction between communities, wildlife and forest environments mean that we must look beyond traditional approaches to malaria control," he said.

Hajiji said addressing zoonotic



malaria requires surveillance, research and vector control, alongside an understanding of wildlife and environmental change.

"Above all, it requires collaboration across sectors. This is where the One Health approach is so important.

"As Pro-Chancellor of UMS, I am proud that the establishment of this Centre brings together the strengths of UMS, WHO, the Malaysian Health Ministry, the Sabah Health Department and national and international partners.

"We must ensure that research findings lead to practical solutions and public health action, while investing in the young researchers and health professionals who will carry this work forward," he said.

Hajiji said the Sabah Government strongly supports initiatives that advance research, innovation and international collaboration.

"This Centre shows how a Sabah-based institution can contribute to an international public health agenda. It can also help position Sabah as a regional platform for collaboration on zoonotic malaria and One Health.

"Sabah's experience can offer lessons to countries facing similar challenges, just as we can learn from our regional and international partners. This exchange of knowledge and expertise will strengthen us all," he said.

"Congratulations to UMS, the Medicine and Health Sciences Faculty and the Borneo Medical and Health Research Centre on this important achievement. Syabas and well done!" he said.



Mandela, representing the Chief Minister, witnessing the unveiling and signing of the WHO CC plaque by the Director of the Division of Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Control, WHO WPRO, Dr Huang Thi Giang Tran and UMS Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Kasim Mohd Mansur at UMS.



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SUMMARIES

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