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29 SEP, 2026

KV K' 'gau special-needs students win seven medals at BFOI

Daily Express (KK), Malaysia

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R Gonzales

KENINGAU: More than 20 special-needs Form Five students from Kolej Vokasional Keningau (KV Keningau) won three gold, two silver and two bronze medals at the Borneo Festival of Ideas (BFOI) 2026, competing in seven innovation projects across the Ranau and Kota Kinabalu zones.

BFOI 2026 is a series of innovation and entrepreneurship competitions held in several zones before the final round at Universiti Malaysia Sabah on Oct 13 and 14.

The university organised the festival through its Centre for Innovation Management and Commercialisation (PPIP), in partnership with the Institute for Development Studies, building on the Sabah Festival of Ideas held in 2025.

Of the seven projects, four were entered in the Borneo Solid Waste Management Innovation Challenge, two in the Pertandingan Inovasi Kearifan Borneo and one in STEAMQuest Ignite.

Among the participants were hearing-impaired students who communicate using sign language, as well as neurodivergent students.

Their projects were built around their vocational fields at KV Keningau, particularly furniture-making and garment-sewing.

The competition marked the first time the students had taken part in a physical innovation contest open to the public.

Despite it being a new experience for them, the students presented their projects to a panel of judges and interacted with visitors throughout the programme.

Professor Dr Jidon @ Adrian Janaun, a key member of the organising committee, praised the courage and effort shown by the special-needs students who took part in the festival.

He said their participation proved that people with special needs also had great potential to produce creative and innovative ideas when given the right opportunities and space.

"The organisers are committed to making BFOI an inclusive platform, giving Sabahans from all backgrounds the opportunity to showcase creativity, entrepreneurial efforts and proposed solutions to various issues," he said.



Some of the students who participated in the Borneo Festival of Ideas.

KV Keningau Director Lumang Lang said the college remained committed to providing high-quality education, including ensuring that special-needs students under the Integrated Special Education Programme also had the opportunity to take part in competitions and self-development activities.

He also expressed appreciation to the special education teachers who guided, supported and managed the students throughout their participation in BFOI 2026.

"Opportunities like these are important in helping special-needs students build confidence, develop their talents and prove their capabilities in innovation and vocational skills," he said.

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SUMMARIES

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