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Bicbeem 2026 relevant to Sabah's development: Hajiji

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KOTA KINABALU: The inaugural Borneo International Conference on Business, Education, Economics and Management (Bicbeem) is highly relevant in the context of Sabah's development, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor.

"I see the organisation of Bicbeem 2026 as a very meaningful step towards strengthening the knowledge ecosystem and collaborative networks among the Government, higher education institutions, industry and the community.



Mandela visiting the exhibition displays during the opening of the inaugural Borneo International Conference on Business, Education, Economics and Management (BICBEEM 2026) at Raia Hotel Kota Kinabalu, recently.

"I hope this conference will provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and views, while strengthening collaborative networks among participants, researchers, industry practitioners and the institutions involved," he said at the opening of Bicbeem 2026 at Raia Hotel, here, Wednesday.

His speech was delivered by Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister Datuk Ceasar Mandela Malakun.

The Chief Minister said research must be more closely aligned with the actual needs of society, industry and the State's development.

"In the context of Sabah, there are many issues and opportunities that can be explored through collaborative research. These include rural economic development, digital transformation, youth entrepreneurship, smart agriculture, community-based tourism, environmental sustainability, small and medium enterprise development, and enhancing the competitiveness of the local economy.

"I hope the researchers gathered here today will view Sabah and Borneo as a living laboratory for conducting research that has both academic value and practical impact.

"We want to see more collaborative research, exchanges of knowledge and expertise, industry participation, innovation development, entrepreneurship programmes and initiatives that directly benefit the community," he said.

He welcomed strategic collaboration among the Institute for Government and People Cooperation (Ikrar), North Borneo University College (NBUC), University Malaysia Sabah (UMS), University Technology Mara (UiTM), University Putra Malaysia (UPM) and the Borneo Universities Consortium (KUUB) in organising Bicbeem 2026.

"This is an example of how networks between the Government and institutions can be strengthened to expand the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience.

"More importantly, the networks established through BICBEEM should be utilised to connect academic expertise with the needs of the Government, industry and communities," he said.

Hajiji said Sabah has immense potential through its rich natural resources, strategic location, diverse society and the talents of its younger generation, all of which must be fully harnessed.

"However, potential alone is not enough. We must ensure that all these strengths are translated into economic opportunities, improved well-being for the people and sustainable development," he said.