

UMS to collaborate with Zero TB World Korea and Health Dept on tuberculosis

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Kota Kinabalu: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) will collaborate with the Headquarters of Zero Tuberculosis World, Republic of Korea (Zero TB World) and the Department of Health Sabah (DHS) to maintain the quality of life for tuberculosis patients in Sabah, Malaysia.

UMS itself has established the Tuberculosis Research Centre in Sabah to solidify the mutual collaboration among these three organizations.

The centre aims to reduce the mortality, morbidity and transmission of tuberculosis while preventing drug resistance until tuberculosis is no longer a threat to public health.

A Letter of Intent was signed between the university's deputy vice chancellor research and innovation, Prof

Rosnah Ismail, and Zero TB World vice president Dr Kim Sung Jin yesterday and the State Health director Dr Mohd Yusof Ibrahim is expected to sign the document on another day.

This is the first of such a collaboration between the Malaysian government and the South Korean non-governmental organisation, which have helped countries around the world to reduce TB to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), in which it targeted that in 2015 all countries should have brought down their TB to the levels that can be considered as eliminated.

Prof Rosnah said the university's School of Medicine is a good training as well as service centre because it is spacious and is already provided with a diagnostic laboratory for TB that is well equipped with Biosafety Cab-

inets Class II.

"The School of Medicine is manned with experienced physicians, medical officers, nurses and medical laboratory technicians. Furthermore, the school will be producing its first batch of fully graduated nurses and medical laboratory technicians at the end of this semester," she said, adding that the physical infrastructure in Sabah such as the university's polyclinic and laboratories, the respiratory medicine ward in Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the 32 TB treatment centres throughout the State will facilitate the achievement of the goal set by WHO with the support of Zero TB World.

The Dean of the School of Medicine, Professor Dr Osman Ali said Zero TB World will provide the components of the expertise, medicine and equipment while the university and the State health department will provide the in-



(from left) Mr Won In Sik, Dr Kim Sung Jin, Prof Rosnah Ismail & Prof Dr. Osman Ali

frastructure and human resource.

"Sabah is considered having the highest incidence of TB among the states in Malaysia and it is timely for

this kind of operation since Zero TB will bring in the most modern and current technologies to reduce the burden of diseases due to Tuberculosis. Zero TB World will introduce

the Community TB Centre (CTC) here, which has been implemented in Korea where they manage to bring down the tuberculosis to the lowest level," he said.

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