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# UMS offers more courses

By Ruben Sario

**KOTA KINABALU:** More courses are now being offered by University Malaysia Sabah as part of its effort to meet the manpower req-

uirements of the country.

UMS vice-chancellor Prof Dato' Abu Hassan Othman (pictured right) said the increase is part of the planned expansion of the university which

has also included two new faculties.

The faculties are the School of Engineering and Information Technology and the School of Education and Social Development.

He said the university will also more than double its intake this coming July to 490 students from the present inaugural batch of 207 students.

The university is also increasing the number of its teaching staff from the present 30 to 83 at the same period.

"The new courses which we have introduced are designed to cater to the manpower requirements of the country," Abu Hassan said yesterday.

"The courses are market driven and are to match the requirements of either the public sector, industry or commerce."

Citing an example, he said two programmes will initially be offered at the School of Engineering and these are civil and electric and electronic.

"The Information Technology programme will initially offer computer science courses," Abu Hassan said.

He said there will be 20 places offered in each of the three programmes this July.

The focus of intake for the School of Education is science and mathematics oriented students as there is great demand for such teachers in the State.

"The Social Development programme in this school is aimed at training teachers in subjects such as geography and history," Abu Hassan said.

He said there will be 50 places offered at this school for the July intake.

Abu Hassan also said three existing schools will be offering nine additional courses in the same period.

The School of Science and Technology will be offering programmes in plant technology, biotechnology, industrial chemistry and physics and electronics.

The School of



Business and Economics will be offering monitoring economics, hotel management and banking while the School of Social Science will be offering sociology and anthropology and youth and community development.

In a related development, Abu Hassan said UMS will continue to keep a low ratio between the number of teaching staff and students which has been a plus factor in the university's first batch of students.

"We will be maintaining ratio of one teaching staff for every 10 students in science and technology courses and a ratio of one teaching staff for every 15 students in the social sciences courses," he said.

He said the low ratio is one of the reasons the inaugural batch of UMS students scored near 100 percent passes in their first year examinations.

"Since the size of the classes are small, the teaching staff can provide closer supervision," Abu Hassan said.

"It also works well in fostering good rapport between the lecturers and students."

On the UMS' permanent campus, Abu Hassan said the masterplan is expected to be completed in March.

"We hope to start the infrastructure works by the middle of the year," he said.

Preliminary works such as land survey is now being carried out at the permanent campus site near Sepangar Bay.

The UMS is presently using part of the Yayasan Sabah Community College buildings at Kuala Inanam as its temporary campus.