



Dr Mohd Harun (third left) exchanging documents with Dr Chou. BP 17-12-13 1

## S'pore students to study coastal management in UMS

By Jenne Lajjun

**KOTA KINABALU:** The National University of Singapore (NUS) will be sending some of its students to Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to study coastal management.

According to NUS' Bachelor of Environmental Studies Programme Director, Professor Dr Chou Loke Ming, UMS' Borneo Marine Research Institute (BMRI) was really advanced in the field of marine science and aquaculture and that students from NUS would be able to learn from it.

"Also, Sabah has interesting coastal management issues and we want our students to understand this because we don't have this issue in Singapore. That is why we chose to come here," he told a press conference after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UMS and NUS yesterday.

Meanwhile, UMS vice chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah said that the MOU was an opportunity for UMS to work with one of the

finest universities in Asia.

"I see vast opportunities in this because it shows that we have strength in our marine science division," he said.

He added that the MOU would hopefully make UMS visible to the eyes of the world.

"That is our objective," he said.

In his speech prior to the MOU, Dr Mohd Harun said that the MOU was the culmination of the interaction between UMS BMRI and the senior officers of NUS.

"I hope the MOU that we are signing today will define a productive relationship between these two institutions of higher education and will emerge as a showcase for international collaboration in academic programmes," he said.

He added that Malaysia and Singapore were neighbours and have strong similarities in their tropical ecosystem.

"Working together can, therefore, generate information which is relevant to both countries. It saves cost, time and resources to achieve good results when academics of neighbouring

countries work together on topics of mutual interest and global importance," he said.

He also said that the MOU formalised relationship between UMS and NUS in a way that it opened the possibilities of wider cooperation between the various departments and academic faculties in UMS and NUS.

He added that the signing of the MOU would be followed by the implementation of a modular course on Coastal Environment.

"Sabah is a place where visiting students from NUS will find a great diversity of habitats and species of coastal and marine flora and fauna. I am sure more discussions will take place between Borneo Marine Research Institute of UMS and NUS to discuss the modalities of implementing this course which looks very interesting," he said.

He said that foreign researchers who conducted observations here in Sabah were able to generate new and valuable information on marine biodiversity.