

## UMS inked Timor-Leste's Ministry of Education, Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources

By **KHABIL KIRAM**

khabil@newsabah-  
times.com.my

**KOTA KINABALU:** A memorandum of understanding (MoU) will be signed between Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Timor-Leste's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources on Wednesday.

Harun (pictured) said that, based on the MoU, UMS will be providing its expertise and skills to create a training scheme for Timor-Leste's oil and gas industry.

He added that, so far, 30 trainers from Timor-Leste have been selected by UMS to enroll in UMS's diploma programme, focusing on oil and gas.

UMS is also introducing the programme that is slated to start in September.

"The 30 trainers will be trained in UMS. This is a result

of our recent visit to Timor Leste in February.

"My entourage and I met with Timor-Leste Prime Minister and their minister of petroleum and from the discussion; they would be sending the trainers to study in UMS.

"Hopefully this MoU will materialize what we've discussed," Harun told reporters at a press conference in UMS, here, yesterday.

At the press conference, Harun also announced that the Timor-Leste Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao would be receiving an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Philosophy for International Relations prior to the MoU signing.

He also announced that another MoU between UMS and the Timor-Leste National University would be signed on March 31 in Putrajaya, which will be witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun



Razak.

Speaking more on the MoU, Harun said that it is also a great opportunity to strengthen ties with the neighbouring country while also benefitting Malaysia.

"I think this would open up a lot of investment opportunities for Malaysia in Timor-Leste.

"Timor-Leste sees our country as a good friend since the

very beginning," said Harun, adding that the MoU would also place UMS in the international status.

Harun also said that the MoU would benefit the university's aim towards creating an institution with a niche in oil and gas studies.

Asked on the proposal of introducing direct flights from Kota Kinabalu to Timor-Leste, Harun said that if things go well with Timor-Leste in the future, he would suggest the idea to the relevant authorities.

"We've been thinking about this because during my visit to Timor-Leste, we had to fly to KL then to Bali and then to Timor-Leste.

"I suggest, if possible, for a flight from KK straight to Timor-Leste. I think this is good relationship of both countries. There will be a lot of opportunity for Malaysia to invest in Timor-Leste," said Harun.