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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) offers 4,900 places for new students to pursue various courses. UMS vice chancellor (VC) Prof Datuk Dr Kamaruzaman Ampon said the registration of the new intake of students begins today.

"We offer 4,900 places but we do not know how many will turn up because based on past years' records, we have been offering 5,000 places but those who came for registration numbered about 4,900.

"We thank those who have chosen UMS and hope the next four years will be a fruitful experience for them," he told reporters after launching UMS redesigned website at the main campus here yesterday.

Dr Kamaruzaman added that they also expected to receive appeals for entry after the registration period from those who were not able to come on time.

He said the university provides a grace period of two to three

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weeks in view that some may live in remote areas and might not have received notice of their acceptance yet.

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According to him, 60 per cent of the new intake would be from the peninsula, 35 per cent from Sabah and the remainder from Sarawak.

He said Sabah students usually preferred universities such as the University of Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

"This is a positive thing from the aspect of national integration," he said.

Earlier in his speech the VC said UMS aimed to make its

website among the top 10 websites of higher learning institutions in Malaysia and secure a five-star rating.

The university's website has undergone transformation for the fourth time since UMS was established and this time it will also feature Facebook.

"There will be more initiatives to improve the website by including videoUMS in YouTube," he said.

He was also proud with the university's achievement in attaining a position in Webometrik.

More than five years ago, it ranked more than 3,900 and as of last July it has gone up to 1,419th in rank.