

MoU between UMS, JHEAINS on halal management 'timely'

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KOTA KINABALU: Renewed ties between Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Sabah Islamic Affairs Department (JHEAINS) will ultimately help in the establishment of a laboratory relevant to the department.

The smart partnership between UMS and JHEAINS will help strengthen and improve the state's halal management as well as human resource and infrastructure planning and subsequently lead to the achievement of this cause, said Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister, Datuk Arifin Mohd Arif, at the signing ceremony of a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in UMS here yesterday.

"It is in line with JHEAINS' role as the implementer, monitor and enforcer of halal products in the state which is inclusive of efforts to set up the department's own halal product analysis laboratory in the future," said Arifin of the MoU which was first inked on November 11, 2010.

"From the perspective of expertise sharing by UMS, I believe the MoU will also have a good impact, specifically on JHEAINS halal auditors and monitoring officers in carrying out their duties," he added.

UMS and JHEAINS will cooperate in research initiatives that include the maintenance, production, manufacturing



Arifin (middle) witnessing the MoU signing ceremony between UMS and JHEAINS yesterday along with UMS vice chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah (second left) and JHEAINS director Abd Halim Nayan (second right).

and all activities associated with halal food, said the university's vice chancellor, Professor Datuk Mohd Harun Abdullah.

In addition, he said both parties would cooperate in the training and empowering of human resources expertise and competence in matters concerning halal food

production.

"UMS will act as an agent of change to the community and food industry via the existing expertise and academic ability of its Food Science and Nutrition Faculty (FMSP).

"This mega effort is not easily realized independently, except with the help and support from associated parties like

JHEAINS. Therefore, I think the MoU between them is very timely," said Harun.

Among those present at the ceremony were UMS registrar Datuk Abdullah Mohd Said, JHEAINS deputy director Ustaz Mohamad Sidik Awang and FMSP dean Associate Professor Dr Sharifudin Md Shaarani.

Tap big halal market potential, entrepreneurs urged

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KOTA KINABALU: The vast potential in the halal products market is a tremendous opportunity that should not be missed out by entrepreneurs who intend to venture into the halal food sector, said Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) vice chancellor Professor Datuk Mohd Harun Abdullah.

"Entrepreneurs should tap into the halal product market in the country and abroad," he said at the signing ceremony of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between UMS and the Sabah Islamic Affairs Department (JHEAINS) here yesterday.

"Furthermore, halal products and services, which are not limited for the usage of Muslims alone, can fulfil the needs of non-Muslim consumers," he added.

According to Harun, in catering to 1.8 billion of the Muslim population, the estimated world halal market for food and other products is worth USD2.3 trillion (RM7.1 trillion) a year.

Reports have also shown that Malaysia had exported RM9.2 billion worth of halal products in the first quarter of 2014 alone, said the vice chancellor.

"Europe, which has the third largest Muslim population after Asia and Africa, has a halal market worth an estimated USD30 billion. The high purchasing power and increase in the number

of educated Muslims in the Europe market has not only contributed to the increase in halal food consumption but also to the rapid growth of halal trade.

"This is due to the confidence and understanding that the halal verified products have gone through stringent inspection process and quality control standards," said Harun.

However, collaborated efforts to develop the integrity of the state's halal industry to improve the country's economy needs to be continuous. Various fields needs to be studied and many SME entrepreneurs in the industry need to be trained so that the local halal products can be exported abroad, he stressed.

Besides that, he said consumer knowledge is among the issues that need to be developed to overcome the various food safety crisis faced by the country.

"The conception of Muslims, who dine in premises with a 'no alcohol' or 'no pork' display, need to be corrected as the value of halal food is greater as explained through the syariah and scientific aspect," advised Harun.

He added that UMS aims to ensure that products verified by JHEAINS Sabah will fulfil the syariah requirements of halal and safe besides being clean and of good quality standards.