

# Musa urges UMS to expedite pharmacy faculty

**KOTA KINABALU:** Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman wants the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) to expedite the creation of a pharmacy faculty.

In making the call, he said a local faculty would be able to better understand the types of healthcare issues in the state.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there is a ratio of 2,000 patients to one pharmacist in a developed country currently.

"With the current output of 1,000 pharmacists annually, Malaysia is expected to have one pharmacist to every 1,600 patients by 2020.

"However, taking into consideration geographic disparities, it may take

Sabah longer to achieve this target as some pharmacists may not want to be posted to the state.

"That is why, we need a pharmacy faculty in UMS," he said in his speech at the Sabah Pharmaceutical Society's 31st installation dinner banquet here last night.

The text of his speech was read by state community development and consumer affairs minister Datuk Azizah Mohd Dun.

Apart from becoming government and community pharmacists, Musa noted there was another branch of pharmacy which was worth venturing into.

"Malaysia's aspiration to become a high-income nation can be achieved through industrial

pharmacy, which focuses on research and development of new medicines.

"If we put our mind to this, the local pharmacists can become part of teams that create new cures, helping millions worldwide," he said.

Musa said Sabah was also blessed with biological diversity and commercialisation of local remedies that relied on local and indigenous vegetation, which could potentially generate a significant income to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

"If Sabah is able to tap into just one per cent of the global medicinal plant industry, we could earn up to US\$2 billion (US\$1 = RM3.2) or about RM6.5 billion, bringing with it untold spin-offs," he said. — Bernama