

# UMS needs a forested 'lab' for its students

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**KOTA KINABALU:** University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is open to collaboration opportunities with relevant agencies to propel the development and advancement of the forestry field in Sabah.

UMS Vice Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin said UMS has the resources and expertise in the field to assist the government in their commitment towards ensuring 50 per cent of land in Sabah is forested.

"The forest is one of the biggest and most valuable assets in Sabah, where reserves are well taken care of. UMS views the forest as valuable knowledge that should be explored. Therefore, university management has made the effort to revive the Tropical Forestry Faculty for that purpose," he said.

Yap said this at a recent trip to the

Pusat Sejadi Hutan Lipur Kawang, Papar near here, with the UMS Board of Directors. According to Yap, the employability of graduates in the forestry programme is also encouraging, at 90 per cent.

"UMS needs forested areas as a 'lab' or field for students, specifically in the forestry programme, to support the learning process.

This trip is seen as an opportunity for collaboration between the university and the Sabah Forestry Department to enable UMS to fulfil that requirement, in addition to exploring the potential of forest reserves for expansion," he said.

Earlier, UMS Ecocampus management centre director Associate Professor Dr Berhaman Ahmad said the visit was also to

look at facilities available at the forest reserve, as well as discuss potential cooperation between both parties.

"UMS hopes for Pusat Sejadi Hutan Lipur Kawang, Papar to become a learning space for UMS students, not limited to forestry students but also to students from other programmes such as hospitality," he said.

Also present were members of the UMS Board of Directors Datuk Kamarlin Ombi and Datuk Dr Jainab Ahmad Ayid, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Associate Professor Ts Dr Ramzah Dambul, Tropical Forestry Faculty dean Associate Professor Dr Normah Awang Besar @ Raffie and UMS Centre of Investment, Endowment and Waqf director Dr Rafiq Idris.



Yap (centre) with members of the UMS Board of Directors and university senior key officers pictured with Sabah Forestry Department personnel.