

# UMS is upgrading ICT infrastructure towards smart campus status

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is in the process of upgrading and replacing its Communications and Information Technology (ICT) infrastructure at all its campuses including in Labuan and Sandakan towards becoming a smart campus.

UMS vice chancellor, Datuk Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin said the infrastructure and basic necessities must be upgraded and capable of accommodating the needs that were set to be implemented to turn UMS into a smart campus.

"A smart campus is very closely dependent on the speed and network access level and internet connection. As such, UMS will boost its network system and ICT security and replace the Unified Communication System - UCS with another which would be fully using the telephone.

"In addition, UMS will widen the coverage and density of the Wi-Fi service for both areas, namely, inside buildings and the surroundings outside buildings. All these, I am led to understand, to date, are still in the tender evaluation stages. God willing, they will be ready in a short time," he added.

He said this in his message in conjunction with his 100th day as UMS vice chancellor, here on

Wednesday.

At the same time, Taufiq said at the same time UMS would also continue to speed up the university's integrated system's development.

"This includes developing the financial and accounting system, administration, research and academic itself via internal growth. We are aware the systems are quite large and are surely complicated, but I am confident and believe, with the expertise that we have, the integrated system will be successfully developed.

"Other than developing the new system, we have also escalated effort to change and integrate the existing systems which were currently accessed separately. Among the systems which have been successfully developed were the Staff Attendance Recording System (STARS), Student Information System and Research and Innovation Information System," he said.

He said UMS had also implemented the cashless campus, whereby through this initiative, students did not have to conduct transactions using cash.

"For example, the students can pay their fees or payments for other services through systems like BOOST, QRPAY Maybank, Alipay and others. It must be expanded further so

that the objective of turning UMS into a cashless campus is achieved and is more comprehensive.

"Among the criteria which must exist in a smart campus is the smartness itself, and this was referred to as Artificial Intelligence. For starters, we have begun the UMS Artificial Intelligence initiative which is known by the name Kukuro, namely, Virtual Assistance Intelligence which will assist the task of the Department of Information Technology and Communication (JTMK) helpdesk in tackling ICT-related problems faced by the students and staff of UMS," he added.

He said the users could interact, question and submit numerous technical issues to Kukuro; and Kukuro would endeavour to give and suggest solutions to the problem and issues.

Currently, Taufiq, said, Kukuro was like a human too, still in the learning process and could only entertain topics related to the problems of ICT.

"It will be expanded to the topics of other departments such as academic and research. I see in future, we can ask Kukuro any question and information we want, Kukuro will become a source of information and a good friend to all," he said. – Bernama