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Sabah-Najib

VARSITY BEARS TESTIMONY TO FEDERAL-STATE TIES, SAYS NAJIB

KOTA KINABALU, Feb 19 (Bernama) -- Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said today Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia's ninth university, bore testimony to the prevailing cordial ties between the federal and state governments.

He said the university with the acronym "UMS", which could also be taken to mean "Untuk Mu Sabah" (For You Sabah) should be a symbol of pride for Malaysians particularly Sabahans as it was being built with almost 100 per cent local expertise.

" The university is a living proof that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and other BN leaders had never reneged on their promise to the people," he said when speaking at a dialogue attended by Dr Mahathir with UMS' teaching staff and students at its permanent campus in Sepanggar Bay, near here.

He said Dr Mahathir had on Jan 1994 promised to build a university in Sabah if the BN was given the mandate to rule the state in the 1994 state election.

He had fulfilled his promise by building the RM527.7 million university on a 400ha site in Sepanggar Bay. Construction work started in 1995 for the university, which is now 50 per cent completed.

The university, which has 3,000 students now, is expected to be fully completed in 2005.

Najib also described its location, overlooking the South China Sea with Mount Kinabalu in the background, as the most beautiful as compared to other universities in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, UMS vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Abu Hassan Othman said 629 graduates are expected to receive their scrolls at the university's first convocation this year.

The university is expected to have an enrolment of 5,000 students by middle of this year with eight faculties offering courses in 40 disciplines.

On the Chair for the Kadazandusun Language Studies to be set up at the university as agreed to by Najib last week, Abu Hassan said the setting up of the chair would enable studies to be carried out on the mother tongue and cultures of the Kadazandusun community, the biggest ethnic group in Sabah.

-- BERNAMA

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