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Private IT-based varsity in the offing

BENTONG, Fri. - A private information technology-based university - comprising three separate campuses - will be opening its doors to about 3,000 students soon.

The number of students is expected to increase to an estimated 13,000 within three years.

The university, which has yet to be named, will be the first private IT-based higher educational institution in the country.

The other two IT universities are the Multimedia University and Universiti Tun Abdul Razak, both public educational institutions.

The new university, which will offer a full range of degree and postgraduate courses, is open to both Malaysian and international students.

Foreign students targeted are mainly those from Singapore, China, Indonesia, Thailand and India.

The university will be developed in two phases.

For the first phase, a 100,000 sq ft city campus will be set up in Kuala Lumpur, accommodating about 3,000 students.

The campus, to eventually expand to 150,000 sq ft, will be taking in its first batch of students within a year.

A fully functional cyber campus is also expected to be launched at the same time in the city.

Another 40ha campus will be built at Bukit Tinggi, near here. Upon its expected completion in three years, the Bukit Tinggi campus will cater to some 10,000 students.

The university is a project by Berjaya Group Berhad; Informatics Holdings Ltd, a Singapore public-listed company involved in investment holdings, and a franchisor for computer and commercial planning centres and examination facilitators; and Tadmansori Holdings Sdn Bhd, an investment holding company.

At a signing ceremony witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Bukit Tinggi Resort today, the three major parties agreed that each take a 30 per cent stake in the joint venture to own and manage the university.

A strategic partner will be sought for the remaining 10 per cent stake.

The initial investment is expected to total RM10 million.

A new joint venture company will be formed to operate the university, whose establishment is subject to the approval of the Government.

Under the joint venture agreement, Informatics will be responsible for the setting up of the structure, operations and management of the university.

It will also provide the curriculum on-line and content as well as market the university.

Berjaya will set up the physical infrastructure of the university's main campus.

The university will be taking in students from 279 locations in 30 countries around the world.

A "global Internet-enhanced university", it will offer both traditional face-to-face learning and virtual, or e-learning.

Berjaya Group director Tan Sri Abdul Rahman Din, at a Press conference later, said the three parties involved hoped they would be getting the licence to establish the university soon.

"We have formed the joint venture company and will be submitting our application soon.

"We have a good track record of 15 years in education."

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