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University-Garden

IIUM CAMPUS A GARDEN OF KNOWLEDGE AND VIRTUE

KUALA LUMPUR, April 5 (Bernama) -- Universities have always been tagged with the "ivory tower" image which implies exclusivity and elitism.

To eradicate this perception among the public and make its campus open to all, the International Islamic University Malaysia's (IIUM)s new campus here has adopted the theme "Garden of Knowledge and Virtue."

IIUM rector Prof Dr Kamal Hassan said that in the pursuit of acquiring knowledge and information these days, the aspect of virtue had often been ignored and forgotten.

"We chose 'garden' for its equalising and democratising environment. So a garden of knowledge and virtue would mean that our pursuit of acquiring knowledge should be imbued with moral values and virtue," he told a press conference on the official opening of the campus by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, scheduled for April 17.

He said the IIUM campus was also designed as a pedestrian campus where all students and staff are expected to walk around under shades. The academic buildings are interlinked with each other, with a mosque at its centre.

IIUM started at its Petaling Jaya campus, which now houses its matriculation centre, in 1983 with 153 students reading law and economics. Now it has 16,000 students, 6,000 of whom are doing matriculation courses.

For the coming July session, IIUM will take in 1,800 degree students, 1,000 of whom would come from its matriculation centre, 300 Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia (STPM) leavers and 500 foreign students.

Kamal said that about 15 percent of IIUM's degree students currently were foreigners, and the university planned to raise it to 20 percent.

IIUM has also planned an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) faculty, now pending approval from the Ministry of Education. Kamal expects it to open in the next 12 months.

The university has nine faculties or kulliyyahs. They are the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyyah of Laws, Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences, Kulliyyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge & Human Sciences, Kulliyyah of Medicine, Kulliyyah of Engineering, Kulliyyah of Architecture & Environmental Design, Kulliyyah of Education, Kulliyyah of Science and Kulliyyah of Pharmacy.

The Kulliyyah of Medicine is located on IIUM's campus in Kuantan, Pahang. Its Kulliyyahs of Science and Pharmacy are also to be placed in Kuantan over the next two years.

IIUM's new campus, spanning 272 hectares in Sungai Pusu, Gombak, near here, houses administration offices, faculties and hostels that can accommodate up to 17,000 students. It was put up at a cost of RM650 million.

In conjunction with its official opening, IIUM will also host the sixth executive council session and the second general conference of the Federation of Universities of the Islamic World from April 15 to 19.

The students, meanwhile, will put up a carnival to mark the historic occasion.

-- BERNAMA

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