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Institute for Muslim unity to be set up

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KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - An International Institute for Muslim Unity will be set up within the International Islamic University Malaysia Gombak campus with the objective of promoting unity and integration among Muslims worldwide.

IIUM rector Professor Dr M. Kamal Hassan said the idea was mooted by university president Tan Sri Sanusi Junid who made the announcement during the World Assembly of Muslim Youth on Feb 14.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has approved its establishment with Sanusi being the institute's chairman."

He said Sanusi was now working out the structure of the institute and gathering support from foreign countries, ambassadors of Muslim countries in the senate and the governing board of the university to help promote the university and the institute.

"As soon as the structure is finalised and the funding is ascertained, the institute will be set up," he said, adding that currently funds were limited and financial support had to be sought from inside and outside the country.

He said they needed at least RM5 million to fund a chair in the institute.

"Most American universities seek at least US\$2 million (RM7.6 million) for a chair. So we are looking for sponsors," he added.

Kamal said they hoped to get top-notch scholars to come to the institute to work on issues of Muslim unity.

The institute will confine itself to research besides being actively involved in promoting Muslim unity which is the top agenda for Muslim countries.

Asked why IIUM was chosen to set up the institute, Kamal said the university represented more than 90 countries and therefore, it was the best place to forge unity.

Kamal said the establishment of the institute was a long-term project for the strengthening and solidarity of the ummah.