

Tuanku Nur Zahirah Launches UMT Research Vessel
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KUALA TERENGGANU, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- The Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Nur Zahirah Friday launched Universiti Malaysia Terengganu's (UMT) research vessel, the RV Discovery, in Pulau Duyong here.

Tuanku Nur Zahirah, who is UMT Chancellor, was accompanied by the Yang Dipertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin. They then proceeded to visit the vessel.

UMT Vice-Chancellor Datuk Dr Aziz Deraman said with the RV Discovery, UMT is the first university in Malaysia to own a sophisticated ship for ocean studies and research.

The RV Discovery will become the pride and an icon for UMT in their effort to become a centre of excellence for exploration, generation and spreading of knowledge related to the ocean.

UMT is confident that the large investment on the construction and maintenance of the RV Discovery will be invaluable to the community in understanding, preserving and ensuring sustainable marine resources for future generations, he said.

Aziz said Syarikat Kay Marin Sdn Bhd began construction of the 35 metre long vessel weighing 300 tonnes in September 2008, whereby the RM15 million ship is furnished with the latest equipment at par with others in the world.

This include electronic maps, travel aid device and water depth gauge that is able to function up to 6,000 metres into the sea.

The vessel, which is capable of sailing over 4,000 nautical miles, will allow scientists to stay at sea longer besides being equipped with salt water treatment facilities for portable water supply as well as a dry and wet lab.

It also features a pyrogen fire extinguishing system and comfortable cabins which can accommodate 12 crew members and 23 trainees at any time. These facilities will assist local and foreign researchers and UMT students taking up courses in ocean science, marine biology, nautical science, maritime transportation and maritime technology.

Aziz said the RV Discovery's maiden journey will be held by year-end from Kuala Terengganu to Langkawi before beginning actual operations.

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