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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) successfully defended their overall title at the 2nd Sabah’s Higher Learning Institution Sports meet hosted by them which ended on Sunday.

The 87-member squad retained the Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Dr Mary Yap Kain Ching Challenge trophy with seven gold, two silver and one bronze.

They won the gold in women futsal, women beach volleyball, men and women basketball, football, netball and sepak takraw. They only missed out on the beach volleyball title that went to Kota Kinabalu Polytechnic, who finished second overall with one gold, two silver, two bronze.

Third place was won by UMS Labuan with two silver and one bronze while in fourth place was UiTM with one silver and three bronze.

UMS Sports Centre Director Asraaf Fong Abdullah thanked UMS Vice Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin for his support in the development of sport saying, he was pleased with the athletes and that it was well planning from the start that resulted in the success.

"I have instilled the winning mindset to the athletes very early on and I am very happy with us winning the title for the second time running. UMS have always been sports powerhouse here in Sabah and Borneo and I hope they can repeat the same success in years to come as well as to excel in national events such as Malaysian Higher Learning Institution Sports Meet (Sukit) to be held in February in UKM next year and the Masum Games."

A total of 767 athletes from 20 institutions in the state took part in the two-day event, and the prizes were presented by Head of Assistant Director, Sports Division Malaysian Higher Education Ministry Tony Azman.

He said the event was a success with the participation of 67 athletes, and reckoned the event should be continued every year with the positive feedbacks from the students. He also expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Ministry to Kamarudin for his support in hosting the games for the second time in UMS.