

'UMS resort' to train students into hospitality

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Rini Zahlifah Ismail

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) plans to build an eco-friendly Cultural Resort Village on 40 to 50 acres of beach land to train its hospitality students beyond the classroom.

Dominador S. Tupaz, Jr, Treasurer/Board Director Southeast Asian Community Management Corporation, Manila office, elaborated more on this during a press conference after the signing of a MoU between UMS and

the Seagate Global Group, here, Friday.

Dominador pointed out that resorts are normally owned by rich people which sometimes includes foreigners and according to him, it is what makes the rich continue adding more to their riches while the poor have no way out of their poverty.

He added that the concept of the proposed resort is to teach locals how to transform themselves from rags to riches as entrepreneurs who have their own homestays which helps generate

income for themselves. "We want locals to benefit," he said, adding, "Sabah's location is also perfect as it is near the BIMF (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines)

Meanwhile, UMS Vice Chancellor, Datuk Dr Kamaruzaman Hj. Ampon said that university's monthly electricity bill will reach RM2 million when all of the facilities are in place, especially when the construction of the teaching hospital is completed.

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"I strongly believe that Seagate Global Group will be able to help us come up with a solution on how to minimise or overcome this problem through this morning's mutual partnership," he said.

He also said that UMS hoped to reduce its future electricity bill between 20 to 30 per cent by using alternative energy.

"With the signing of this MoU, UMS has made one crucial step to a mutual partnership with Seagate Global Group. You have the technology and financial capabilities which are much needed for our future development, and this could best be achieved through the platform created by this MoU, for a win-win situation," he added.

Chairman and Chief Investment Officer at Seagate Global Group, Prof. William Lawton

Seagate chose Sabah and UMS, in particular.

"This is the only university in Malaysia that we are focused on".

Among the other proposed components of the MoU include a pilot programme for Incubator of Solar Energy Demonstrating Green Technology and affordable construction techniques, a UMS solar power plant and a sisterhood programme between Tsinghua University and UMS.

"I understand that Seagate Global will construct one building as a show-case and I believe is a pioneer building in Malaysian campus using green technology," said Kamaruzaman.

"I would like to put on record the hard work of the School of International Tropical Forestry who mooted this agreement, the Dean, Associate Professor Dr Normah Awang Besar and Dr Berhaman Ahmad who made the link with Seagate Global Group," he added.