

# UMS pillar of hope for State bumis: Dr M

**KOTA KINABALU:** Universiti Malaysia Sabah is destined to be the pillar of hope and symbol of inspiration for bumiputeras in the State.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said being richly endowed with forest, excellent marine life and environment as well as cultural diversity, Sabah was set to become an ideal place for research.

"For the bumiputeras, the UMS will certainly become the pillar of hope and symbol of inspiration for the development of the State," Mahathir said at the ground-breaking ceremony for the university permanent campus site at Likas Bay near here yesterday.

Mahathir's wife Datuk Seri Panglima Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohd. Ali, Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Tun Mohd Said, State and Federal Ministers including Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak were among the more than 1,000 people who witnessed the historic event.

Najib in his speech earlier, said the setting up of the UMS followed the pledge made by the Prime Minister during a mass gathering in Beaufort over a year ago.

"As we can see from the establishment of the UMS, the pledge is not a mere

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promise to the people of Sabah," Najib said.

The first phase of the campus costing some RM200 million over a 413-hectare site is scheduled to be ready in 1998. The entire project, which was mooted in Nov 1994 will cost the Federal government a sum of RM980 million.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Prime Minister said the UMS would not only fill the need to assist in developing the country but also provide its services to Sabah and her people.

Towards this end he urged the university to attain excellence in carrying out research on areas such as the process of integration between the bumiputeras and non-bumiputeras as well as among the ethnic communities in the State.

"The process of ethnic integration in Sabah is very unique," said Mahathir, "a study on this can assist the government in moulding a Malaysian race with shared historical experience, values and a feeling of togetherness."

"The moulding of a Malaysian race will overcome the ethnic barriers without losing the identities of the ethnic communities," he added.

Mahathir credited the UMS for its proposal to set up a research unit to carry out studies on the tropical biology and also lauded its proposal to set up a natural habitat museum, which will function as an avenue to educate the people on natural heritage besides providing a bio-system research centre for the country.

The move is in line with country's effort to step up studies and research on the secrets of life on earth as this will not only increase our knowledge about the country's environment but enlighten us on the measure to conserve it, he added.

The UMS was also urged to give emphasis to the studies of the State's natural habitats both inland and underwater through its marine re-search unit.

Mahathir stressed the need to produce not only skilled, efficient and learned graduates but also those with high moral values, discipline, trustworthiness and patriotism to the country.

A university like the UMS is not merely a knowledge institution providing academic studies in the form of hard sciences but it also contributes towards the country's development and upgrading of cultural values and intellectual communities, he said.

Salleh:  
Varsity  
a dream  
come  
true for  
Sabahans

**KOTA KINABALU:** The setting up of the Universiti Malaysia Sabah is a dream which has become a reality for the people of Sabah.

Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Tun Said, yesterday said the ground-breaking ceremony for its permanent campus was as a clear proof of the Federal government's seriousness in developing the State to be on par with the other states in the country, especially in the area of academic excellence.

"We are hoping that the UMS will be able to contribute to the government by involving its manpower resources in our socio-culture, socio-economic planning and development of the State," he added.

Salleh was optimistic that the UMS, with its proposal to set up various research units, would be capable of providing input into any of the State's agencies and private sector, which are in dire need of the UMS' expertise in accelerating economic growth.

On the part of the State government, the Chief Minister assured that it would always work with the UMS.