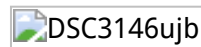


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## USM, IIUM SIGN MOU TO SPEARHEAD GLOBAL HALAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES

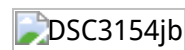


PENANG, December 2015 – Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to spearhead the initiative to collaborate in research and services related to global syariah compliance and halal certification.

This noble initiative which was expected to get the cooperation and support from other Malaysian public universities in the near future, will help to further strengthen Malaysia's position as the leading global halal hub.

USM Vice-Chancellor Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman said, this MoU would combine the expertise of USM in halal testing and analysis services and the IIUM expertise in syariah compliance, which will later be extended to other institutions of higher learning within the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) network and other nations that require syariah compliance.

"We hope to see more public universities joining in the collaboration and sharing their expertise on halal research and development (R&D) in the field of science and syariah, as well as extending it to include more international cooperation especially among the ASEAN countries," said Omar in a press conference held after the MoU signing ceremony at a hotel here recently.



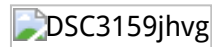
He added that this endeavour by the public universities would also help to support the national agenda of ensuring Malaysia remains as the leading global halal hub while realising the government's aspiration of establishing a Global Halal Standard and Reference Centre for all matters pertaining to halal industry.

Omar signed the MoU on behalf of USM while IIUM was represented by its Rector, Professor Dato' Sri Dr. Zaleha Kamaruddin, and witnessed by the Higher Education Director-General Dato' Professor Dr. Asma Ismail, Universiti Malaysia Perlis Vice-Chancellor Professor Emeritus Dato' Dr. Kamarudin Hussin who was also the Chairman of the Public University Vice-Chancellors and Rectors Committee (JKNC/R UA) as well as 18 Vice-Chancellors who were in Penang for the JKNC/R UA meeting.

Zaleha said, IIUM was delighted to be working with USM in halal research as USM had been a leader in the science industry and there was a need for IIUM to combine syariah expertise with science in the field of testing and analysis.

"We hope to see Malaysia setting up an international halal compliance standard guideline in the halal industry based on scientific approach beginning next year.

"Therefore, I hope other public universities will also join in and share their expertise, knowledge, experiences and best practices to strengthen the efforts in this emerging industry at the global level," she said.



Meanwhile in her speech, Asma said that such collaboration in the niche area of halal industry was indeed timely and would be fully supported by the Higher Education Ministry.

"It can also serve as a launching pad for other public universities to pool their strength and resources together to ensure Malaysia continue to lead in halal research and to stay at the forefront of the halal industry.

"Besides pooling their expertise together, the universities can also seek to obtain external funding and international grants, for example, from Qatar Foundation, to support the research work, breaking away from the norm of depending hugely on internal funding," she said.

Kamarudin also welcomed such a move of having a MoU signing ceremony in conjunction with the JKNC/R UA meeting and he hoped that this practice will continue in future meetings as it signified the unity and togetherness of the public universities in fulfilling the aspiration of the country.

JKNC/R UA would encourage similar collaborations in the future to strengthen the nation's higher education as well as forging cooperation with countries where Malaysian universities have international networking including the OIC," he added.

Also present were USM Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Dato' Dr. Muhamad Jantan and IIUM Director of Corporate Communications and Marketing Professor Dr. Ainul Juria Maidin.

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