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USM STRENGTHENS TIES WITH ALUMNI IN INDONESIA

MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA (INDONESIA), June 2015 - Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) plans to increase the enrollment of its offshore undergraduate students to 2,000 through collaborations with universities in North Sumatera in its effort to reach a target of 10,000 students in distance learning courses by 2020.

USM Vice-Chancellor Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman said, USM will offer part-time first degree programmes in various fields through a distance-learning programme in Medan similar to the one conducted by the School of Distance Education in USM.

"This will allow USM alumni in North Sumatera to participate in the existing academic programmes as well," Omar said in a meeting with some 100 USM alumni here recently.

At the meeting, he also welcomed the newly established USM Alumni Association of North Sumatera which will provide a major bulk of the teaching force.

Omar said, USM supports the efforts of establishing the USM Alumni Association and is willing to provide all the necessary financial assistance, including organising conferences.

Currently, USM has more than 140,000 alumni, with another 2,000 more alumni with PhDs.

"We always welcome USM alumni to work together with the university through various collaborative activities that will allow the alumni to stay connected and give back to the university," added Omar.

The USM Vice-Chancellor also briefed them on the latest developments of the university which now has campuses in Penang, Kelantan, Kuala Lumpur and India as well as the efforts to offer academic programmes through partnerships with the world's leading universities.

"With the availability of impactful research centres, more candidates including those from Indonesia are now able to continue their studies to the highest level without the need of going to developed nations such as Europe," added Omar.

The Vice-Chancellor also advised the North Sumatera USM Alumni Association to participate together in community engagement programmes to help those in need, for example, the Rohingya refugees, including providing education to these unfortunate people.

"Likewise, I would like to invite all alumni to contribute back to the society with the knowledge and expertise that they have, for example, helping the victims affected by natural disasters by preparing them on how to face disasters through the sharing of expertise and also helping the elderly through the provision of services such as health care programmes," he said.

Meanwhile, USM Communication alumnus who is now the Head of Postgraduate Programme in Communication Studies at Universitas Sumatera Utara, Dr. Lusiana, speaking on behalf of the North Sumatera USM alumni, welcomed everyone to the gathering and was delighted to share its aspiration with the USM top management who were present.

"USM Alumni Association in North Sumatera, Aceh and Jakarta also plans to hold an international conference on 23 – 25 May 2016, produce refereed publications and propose to involve USM alumni as external examiners for Indonesian students in Malaysia," said Lusiana.

Also present were the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni), Professor Dato' Dr. Adnan Hussein and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & International Affairs (<http://bheaa.usm.my/>)) Professor Dato' Dr. Ahmad Shukri Mustapa Kamal. - Translation: Tan Ewe Hoe/Text: Mohamad Abdullah



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