

MOHE Open To New Academic Programmes To Expand Higher Education Options In Sabah

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KUALA LUMPUR—The Higher Education Ministry (MOHE) is open to applications for new academic programmes at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), polytechnics and community colleges in Sabah to broaden study options at public higher education institutions (IPTA) in the state. Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir said each application would be assessed based on key criteria, including institutional expertise, industry needs, delivery capacity, student demand and graduate employability, while avoiding duplication of programmes among IPTAs.

"This approach ensures the programmes offered are of quality, relevant and aligned with Sabah's economic development needs, while optimising existing expertise and resources," he said during the Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat today. Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir said MOHE is committed to expanding higher education opportunities in Sabah to reduce students' reliance on campuses in Peninsular Malaysia. As of June 30, Sabah had 16 IPTAs, including branch campuses, comprising four public universities, three polytechnics and nine community colleges. UMS offers programmes based on Sabah's strengths, including marine science, aquaculture, biotechnology and medical sciences, while UiTM Sabah focuses on tourism, hospitality, business, administrative sciences, and science and technology. MOHE is also implementing 21 development projects in Sabah worth RM1.05 billion, with RM160.6 million allocated under the First Rolling Plan of the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP) for 2026. Zambry said student admissions depend on programme availability and demand rather than fixed quotas, while the ministry is improving access through niche programmes such as law. He added that the government continues to support university research through MOHE and MOSTI, with initiatives such as RDICE producing commercially valuable outcomes.

