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## Unimas is disabled-friendly university



NEWS CONFERENCE: Fatimah (seated second left) with Mohamad Kadim on her left speaking to the media after the oath taking ceremony yesterday. Teo and Nur Azman are seated at extreme left and right respectively.

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) is found to be disabled-friendly although officially it has yet to cater to students with physical disability.

This was the admission by two disabled students who were among 3,700 others who had enrolled themselves with the university, for its 2013/2014 session September intake.

Both Teo Suat Nei, 21, and Nur Azman Junaini, 20, said they did not face any problem despite the limitation in their mobility due to their condition.

"So far, we find that Unimas is disabled-friendly. Other students are always there to give us their helping hands," they said when interviewed by reporters after the oath taking ceremony for new students at Unimas campus near here yesterday.

Teo, who hails from Batu Pahat, Johor, and the youngest of three siblings, suddenly lost her eyesight when she was six but the total blindness had not weakened her courage to excel in life.

"I am happy and proud to be given the opportunity to further my study in Unimas in the field of economy and management," said Teo, whose ambition is to be a lecturer.

Nur Azman, a local from Taman Sukma in Samariang, crippled both legs during a road accident about a year ago and now he needs a wheelchair to move around.

"My movement has been rather limited due to my condition but that will not discourage me because I have new friends here who are always willing to help.

"On top of that, I must also say that Unimas is a disabled-friendly institution," he said.

Meanwhile, Unimas vice-chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohamd Kadim Suadi said apart from Teo and Nur Azman, they now have around 10 physically impaired students. Although the university has yet to officially cater to such students, they would try their best so that all the underprivileged students would be well taken care of.

On the intake of new students for the 2013/2014 session, he said 4,500 candidates were being offered but up to yesterday 3,700 have enrolled themselves.

"Of the total, 68 per cent are women and only 32 per cent are men," he said at a news conference after the ceremony which was also attended by Welfare, Women and Family Development Minister Datuk Fatimah Abdullah.

He added that by next week more were expected to enrol themselves as some of them have requested for late registration while there were also few who have appealed to be selected.

"Of the total students who have enrolled, 82 are foreigners from 31 countries, including from Africa, the Middle East, Indonesia and China," he said.

He revealed that with the registration of the new students, the total enrollment in Unimas now for under and post graduates was around 15,600 students although their initial target was to achieve 15,000 enrollments by 2015.

"With our present enrollment it looks like we have achieved our goal to enrol 15,000 students two years ahead of our initial target. This indicates that Unimas is now widely known and it has become a university of choice," he said.

However, he said, they have yet to achieve the target set for the enrollment of foreign students and they were still working hard on it.

"Our target is to have five per cent of foreign students out of our total enrollment which means that out of the total 15,000 students, 750 should be foreigners. So far, we have only around 450 foreign students. We are intensifying our efforts to reach our target," he said.

Source: The Borneo Post