

# SARAWAK WANTS UEC RECOGNISED IN ITS UNIVERSITIES

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*Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem says he will discuss the UEC matter with the Education Ministry soon but has yet to reveal any details. — Bernama file pic*

Sarawak will push for the United Education Certificate's (UEC) recognition with the Federal Government.

Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem said he would discuss the matter with the Education Ministry soon but has yet to reveal any details.

“UEC is accepted by other universities in the world but not in our own public universities, and because of this we have lost many talents. If UEC is the problem, why do we still have foreigners in our public universities?” said Adenan when officiating the SJK (C) Chung Hua No1 new block here today.

Adenan's administration is the only one in the country to recognise the Chinese private examination qualifications in the country, which is equivalent to the Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM).

Following the recognition, Sarawakians with UEC qualifications are eligible for the state's civil service and also for Sarawak Foundation education loans.

“I am not doing this because election is just around the corner, but this is the right thing to do for Sarawak’s future. We do not want to lose anymore talents to other countries. Recognising UEC is for the sake of Sarawak and I do not care if the Federal government does not recognise it,” said Adenan.

Most of the private higher institutions of learning accept the qualification, but Universiti Malaysia Sarawak and Universiti Teknologi Mara in the state were bound by the federal regulation.

It is also believed that the negotiations with the Education Ministry would focus on this point.

Meanwhile, the new block for the school, which cost RM5.3 million was made possible with public contributions and RM1.19 million contribution from the Federal Government.

It was formerly known as the Kuching Hokkien School, during the days where Chinese schools were run by different Chinese Clans, 105 years ago in 1911.

It was after the Japanese occupation that the Chinese Associations decided to form a school Management Board to collectively manage all the schools in Kuching.

Presently 28% of the Chung Hua school student population in Kuching are from non-Chinese backgrounds namely Iban, Bidayuh, Malay and others.

Adenan, in acknowledging the contribution of the Chinese community in Sarawak, said it was not right to call them ‘pendatang’.

“In Sarawak, the Chinese who have settled here for generations are one of our own and the state is big enough for all of us to live together,” he added.