

# UC-Unimas linkage soon

BY HARUN JAU

**KUCHING:** The University of Canterbury (UC) in Christchurch, New Zealand is interested to collaborate with Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas), and is inviting post-graduates from Unimas to do their doctoral (PhD) programmes in engineering fields.

This was revealed by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang during a courtesy call by the Vice-Chancellor of University of Canterbury Dr Rod Carr, at his office at Wisma Bapa Malaysia in Petra Jaya here, yesterday.

"The Vice-Chancellor of University of Canterbury had a discussion with his counterpart, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Unimas, as a step forward in forging closer relationship where collaboration can be established," said Jabu.

He recalled that in the 1960s, the New Zealand government was one of the contributing countries to the Colombo Plan Scholarship, giving opportunities to students from under-developed countries to study in New Zealand, and he was one of those who studied at the University of Canterbury.

"We have not lost contact despite the fact it has been more than 50 years since. There are a big number of New Zealand grad-



**DEPUTY** Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Alfred Jabu Numpang (second right) presents a souvenir to University of Canterbury (UC) Vice-Chancellor Dr Rod Carr (second left), as Graeme Steven (right), and Alex Ting look on, during a courtesy call by the latter. PHOTO: JOHN CHAN

uates in Malaysia, of whom about 40 per cent are from Sarawak," he said, adding that a big number of them were in Kuching.

Meanwhile, Dr Carr said the collaboration with Unimas was developing, encouraged by both the senior leaderships at UC and Unimas.

"We are planning on signing a Memorandum of Agreement covering student exchange, faculty exchange, study abroad opportunities, research collaboration as well as funding students from Unimas to take up PhD programmes at University of Canterbury.

"A Memorandum of Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding will emerge from our conversation," he said.

He added that UC was proud of its 50 years of association with young Malaysians to acquire world class education at UC, and many Malaysian graduates from

UC were today holding senior positions in businesses and in the governments of Malaysia and the state of Sarawak.

"We are here to meet our alumni and to express our appreciation for their support to the university. The university is known particularly for its science and engineering and business qualifications, and is ranked 21st in the world in civil and structural engineering, and among the top 100 world ranking in all engineering disciplines.

"So there are opportunities to study at UC although the New Zealand government is no longer able to provide free PhD programmes, but can subsidise the cost by about 70 per cent.

"We have several hundred students from Malaysia studying at University of Canterbury today, and we are looking for more able young Malaysian students. There is limited support scholarship available on a temporary basis," said Dr Carr.

He disclosed that the university's alumni had generously provided some funding towards scholarship for Malaysian students studying abroad at UC.

Dr Carr was accompanied by Graeme Steven, Alumni and Development Manager of UC and Alex K K Ting, the chairman of Kuching Chapter of University of Canterbury Alumni.