

Tajuk : UNIMAS continues to attract

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## February intake sees growing number of foreign students, including three Tajik siblings

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**KOTA SAMARAHAN:** Three siblings from Tajikistan are among 320 new students entering Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) for its February intake.

Rustam Sharipov, 18, and his 17-year-old twin siblings Anvar Sharipov and Farzona Fayzuloeva will all be taking up three-year degree courses in the economics and business faculty.

"We chose Unimas because it is a good university. We respect the Malaysian people because many Malaysians are Muslims and we are also Muslims," Anvar said.

Rustam added that there was an organisation in Tajikistan that helped send students to Malaysia.

"Malaysia is so famous in our

country," he said when met after the student oath-taking ceremony at the Unimas campus here yesterday.

Another international student was 20-year-old Yonas Mehari from Eritrea, who would be studying biotechnology.

"Eritrea is a small nation in the east of Africa and I believe I am the first Eritrean to come to Unimas," he said.

He found out about Unimas from doing some online research after a friend recommended Malaysia to him.

"I decided to come to Unimas because it provides good education, the courses are accredited and the price is affordable.

"I hope to gain a lot from my time here, in terms of education, new experiences and meeting new people and a new culture," Mehari said.



**Delighted to be here:** Students cheering after the oath-taking ceremony for new intakes at the Unimas campus near Kuching yesterday. — ANDRE OLIVEIRO / The Star

For Indonesian student Paramita Annaziati Mahardhika, 22, entering Unimas was a logical choice as she went to school in Kuching.

"I'm originally from Jakarta but I've been living in Kuching for 11 years because my parents are working here," the industrial design undergraduate said, adding that she hoped to get good grades and a job after completing her three-year course.

Meanwhile, French exchange student Axelle Noloni, 22, will spend several months in the applied and creative arts faculty before returning to France in July.

"My university in France, ESC Troyes, is an exchange partner with

Unimas, so I am spending one semester here.

"I am studying design at the Ecole de design de Troyes at my university," she said.

Altogether, 17 international students enrolled in Unimas for the February intake, including those from Bangladesh, China, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria.

Unimas vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Khairuddin Ab Hamid said this was part of the university's efforts to become an international institution.

He called on Malaysian students to be good hosts to their foreign counterparts during their time at Unimas.

"Internationalisation is not one-

way traffic. It is not only about international students coming here to learn about our culture, we can also learn from them about their countries and culture," he said.

Khairuddin also urged the students to make full use of the university's facilities and to be active in campus life.

"Among our facilities are a new sports complex, bowling alley and student pavilion. It is our commitment to provide the best facilities for our students.

"While we have many clubs and societies at Unimas, we also encourage students to create their own activities based on their interests," he said.