

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

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Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) Becomes the Catalyst for Sarawak's Digital Transformation

Kota Samarahan, 4 August 2023: The Tun Abang Haji Openg Digital Centre (TAHODC) building located on the UNIMAS campus in Kota Samarahan, was ceremoniously inaugurated today. The ceremony was graced by the honourable presence of the Premier of Sarawak, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg.

In his inaugural address, he asserted, "Digital transformation is the key to increasing productivity and efficiency. Therefore, it is no longer an option but a necessity for business success in this modern era. Improved productivity and higher efficiency can be achieved through the use of more advanced technology. I am confident that UNIMAS can become a catalyst for the state government in realising the vision of a developed state by 2030 through research activities, expertise sharing, and production of dynamic and holistic graduates."

Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim bin Suaidi, Vice Chancellor of UNIMAS, remarked, "It is hoped that this conducive office building will become a primary catalyst and strengthen the functions and contributions by providing services and expertise not only to UNIMAS but also to the wider community." This is consistent with UNIMAS' digital transformation plan, which aims to make UNIMAS a prominent information and communication technology (ICT) center for the development and digital transformation of Sarawak and the nation's higher education."

The building hosts the Centre for Information Technology Development and Services (CITDS), which is critical in providing ICT services at UNIMAS. The project was constructed with a budget of RM12 million, sourced from UNIMAS' internal financial resources. The naming of the building which was revealed in 2019 as a tribute to the Premier's efforts in advancing Sarawak's digital economic agenda, also commemorates the contributions of the late Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg Abang Sapiee, Sarawak's first Governor.

During the event, Premier Abang Johari also launched three products, namely REKA, Learners for Life, and the Master of Education (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages - TESOL) program.

REKA is a rapid system development tool developed in-house by CITDS UNIMAS. It serves as an easy-to-use, intuitive, and dynamic application builder designed to meet the diverse needs of system development across a wide range of uses and areas.

The new Learning Management System (LMS) called "Learners for Life" was designed specifically by the Centre for Applied Learning and Multimedia (CALM) to improve academic program delivery and lifelong learning through flexible, online and Open Distance Learning (ODL) at UNIMAS. This system enables UNIMAS to better support the Ministry of Higher Education's goal of promoting flexible education and encouraging more young individuals to pursue higher studies. Additionally, the MEd TESOL program was introduced to meet the increasing demand for qualified English teachers, especially in rural areas of Sarawak, and various industries. The first cohort of students will begin their studies in October 2023 at the Faculty of Language and Communication (FLC).

With the inauguration of TAHODC, UNIMAS as a community-driven university for a sustainable world takes a significant stride towards advancing digital transformation, fostering academic excellence and contributing to the development of Sarawak and the nation as a whole.

Yang Berhormat Datuk Rubiah Wang, Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development and P197 Kota Samarahan MP, and Yang Berbahagia Dato Peter Minos, Kota Samarahan Municipal Council Chairman were also present at the ceremony.

U N I M A S