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Subject: VC Urges STHEM To Draw On Expertise To Boost The Tourism And Hospitality Industry



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Universiti Utara Malaysia



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"UUM : UNIVERSITI PENGURUSAN TERKEMUKA"
(THE EMINENT MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY)

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VC URGES STHEM TO DRAW ON EXPERTISE TO BOOST THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY



UUM ONLINE: The School of Tourism, Hospitality & Environmental Management (STHEM), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), needs to be the key player in generating income for the university through tourism activities whilst, at the same time, helping strengthen the tourism sector in the state of Kedah.

The Vice-Chancellor of UUM, Prof. Dato' Seri Dr. Mohamed Mustafa Ishak, said that the Kedah state government is currently intensifying efforts to boost the tourism sector and transform Kedah into a developed state, one that is not solely dependent on the agricultural sector.

"The Kedah state government is in the midst of developing the state economy by invigorating the tourism sector, especially in Langkawi.

"As a university that offers a tourism programme, UUM cannot be left behind. Rather, it should work with the state government to develop the tourism sector in Kedah because UUM has the potential, expertise, and human resource to contribute towards the successful realisation of this agenda," he explained.

"The STHEM can assist in executing several ventures to develop the field of tourism and hospitality. At present, we own a variety of facilities such as the EDC Hotels & Resorts, Academia Lounge, and also a plot of land in Langkawi that is earmarked for development into a Premium Outlet, as is the hotel in Kuala Lumpur. All of these have been acquired in our efforts to generate income for the university.

"We also intend to relocate the STHEM School Centre of Excellence (SCoE), that is, the South East Asia Centre for Tourism Research (SEACToR), to Langkawi and rebrand it as the Langkawi International Research Centre for Tourism and Hospitality (LITH)," said the Vice-Chancellor.

He also suggested that the STHEM look into reviewing and revising its curriculum to meet the needs of the tourism industry. The hands-on approach, he said, should be emphasised in the design of the curriculum to ensure that students gained a balanced exposure to theory and practice.

"This is in keeping with the aspiration of the Ministry of Higher Education as outlined in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) through the 2u2i programme, which requires students to study on campus for two years and gain working experience in industry for another two years," said the Vice-Chancellor at a meeting with the STHEM staff members at the STHEM meeting room yesterday.

Apart from this, the Vice-Chancellor also suggested that the STHEM increase their research activities pertaining to the tourism and hospitality sector in Kedah. He said that the state had a large number of historical relics and sites, as well as attractive tourist destinations, but that there was a dearth of scholarly studies done on them.

The Vice-Chancellor expressed his expectation that, with the establishment of the LITH, more research activities would be conducted to foster the florescence of the tourism and hospitality sector in the state.

Also present at the meeting were the Dean of the STHEM, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurhazani Mohd Shariff; the Director of the Chancellery, Mr. Ahmad Rasidi Abdullah; the Director of the Institute of Quality Management, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faudziah Zainal Abidin; and senior officers of the university.

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