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High hopes for UUM's first blind student

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SINTOK, Sun. — Blind Universiti Utara Malaysia freshie Lim Tien Hong, 22, has no illusion that the next three years pursuing his business degree won't be tough.

The lad from Taiping said he was prepared to face and overcome all obstacles but as UUM's first blind student, he hoped there were enough facilities to enable him to complete his course.

Lim, who became blind in a road accident at aged 10, said although he was used to being independent, he still needed a special printer and computer and friends to help him read and type out his assignments.

"I have my own braille machine but I need the special printer and computer to help me in my work.

"I hope to make lots of friends here because I will need their help to get around and familiarise myself with the campus," he said.

Lim was among 5,567 people who enrolled for degree courses at UUM today.

Acehnese Muhammad Fadheel Djamaly, 19, is eager to pursue a new life after the December tsunami wiped out 64 of his family members.

Fadheel, who was among 32 Indonesian students enrolling today, said his immediate family was spared as they lived six kilometres from the site.

He said he wanted to obtain a degree so that he could return to Aceh and help his family.

There were a total of 64 foreigners among the new undergraduates, including Thais (25), Pakistanis (six) and a Yemeni.

The 412 students enrolled for Masters and PhD programmes included 82 foreigners from Libya, Pakistan, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, India, Nigeria, Syria and the Solomon Islands.