

Attracting Indonesian students

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INDONESIA is a key market for the Malaysian higher education sector.

There are currently about 9,000 Indonesian students in higher education institutes all over Malaysia. And as part of the plan to cement Malaysia's position as a global education hub with a targeted 200,000 international students by 2020, Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS) is strategising to ramp up the numbers.

EMGS, a wholly owned company of the Higher Education Ministry tasked with the global promotion of Education Malaysia, recently held a day-long education fair themed the Future of Modern Education in Jakarta, Indonesia which saw the participation of 18 Malaysian universities — both public and private.

The public universities represented at the fair were Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.

The private universities comprised Management and Science University, Limkokwing University, Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation, Taylors University, SEGI University, HELP University and Meritus University.

At the event, Higher Education minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh delivered a keynote speech titled "Redesigning Higher Education for the Future and the 4th Industrial Revolution: A Malaysia-Indonesia Experience" that gave an overall view of Malaysia's higher education system and the direction it is taking.

Other speakers at the event include the National Council of Professors chief executive officer, Professors Datuk Dr Raduan Che Rose who spoke on Education and Human Capacity Development and Universiti Sains Malaysia vice chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Asma Ismail on Innovations in Postgraduate Studies.

EMGS also held meetings with some of the 350 teacher-counsellors, recruitment agents, heads of high school, university rectors and faculty heads, Indonesian government bodies and officials from Indonesian Higher Education Ministry who attended the event.

The plan, said EMGS chief executive officer



Idris Jusoh (centre) and Rujhan Mustafa (right) getting the audience to participate in the Soaring Upwards call of Malaysian universities.

The EMGS charter is to promote Malaysia as a global education hub.

PROFESSOR DATUK DR RUJHAN MUSTAFA
EMGS chief executive officer

Professor Datuk Dr Rujhan Mustafa, was to increase the number of Indonesian students in Malaysia from 2,000 to 11,000 next year.

"We shared information on higher education in Malaysia and the various successes we have achieved in terms of quality, ranking, access, affordability and lifestyle. A majority of the audience were heads of high schools in Indonesia where high school is the last stage for students before they step into universities after 12 years of schooling. These are our main target market and we had the heads listen in to share with students later," he said.

"The EMGS charter is to promote Malaysia as a global education hub. With familiar culture and language, studying at a university in Malaysia would be an advantage for Indonesian students," he continued.

Rujhan said as an education destination, Malaysia is currently ranked third in terms of preference in Indonesia — after Australia and Germany. And in Malaysia, Indonesian students

prefer to go for programmes at the international university branch campuses.

"Degree and PhD students are the majority among the Indonesian student population in Malaysia followed by the masters and diploma students. We want to increase the number of students at the masters and PhD levels. The Indonesian scholars want to increase their publications and citations. And they have a lot of potential and research. So, in this regard, our postgraduate students and researchers in Malaysia can collaborate with the Indonesians to move ahead together," he said, adding that EMGS' role is to serve universities in Malaysia and to ensure that they continue to develop and grow.

Chairman of Meritus University Tan Sri Dr Halim Mohammad said Indonesian president Jokowi Widodo's emphasis on growing the maritime for the country matches what the varsity has to offer.

"The Indonesian government wants to rebuild its fleet from Sabang in Aceh right to Sulawesi. In my point of view, the maritime industry here has huge potential where they will require many trained personnel: not just captains but those managing ships and ports. So this will augur well for Malaysian education providers like ourselves to bring on board Indonesian students to study in Malaysia, which we have done through our three-year bachelor's degree in maritime business.

"We have 10 Indonesians who have already completed their training at our pilot school and are now flying with Lion Air. Our Diploma in Aviation leads to a commercial pilot license. It's a 20-month programme fully integrated at our flight school in Langkawi," he said.

Meanwhile, Datuk Dr Parmjit Singh, chief executive officer of the APIIT Education Group said the audience at the exhibition and talks were very focused.

"The feedback has been good. We have inquiries as well as interests for student mobility programmes at our campus in Bukit Jalil, Selangor," he said.



Exhibitors getting ready for inquiries.



Among the booths set up at the education fair.