Campus Life

Free education realises dreams of underprivileged students and OKU to pursue studies, transform family fortunes

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PEKAN, 21 January 2026 – The launch of the Malaysia Higher Education Plan (RPTM) 2026–2035 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, marks an important step in efforts to build a nation grounded in humanity, driven by the goal of enhancing education quality for the well-being of the people and the progress of the country.

According to the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah (UMPSA), Professor Ts. Dr. Yatimah Alias, the Prime Minister's announcement on free education for 10,000 students from the poor category through assistance from the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN), compared to approximately 5,800 extremely poor students under last year's budget, will certainly bring joy to students from poor families and parents who were previously unable to realise their children's aspirations due to financial constraints.

"Now, there are 10,000 places provided for poor students to study at university without payment, so parents and these underprivileged students need not worry, as no one will be marginalised.

"They have the opportunity to gain access to education up to the tertiary level.

"Meanwhile, through Yayasan UMPSA, various forms of assistance are also provided, including Excellence Incentives, UMPSA Scholarships, Laptop Assistance, UMPSA Campus Pantry, Zakat Assistance for Muslim students, Self-Sustenance Assistance for non-Muslim students, Disaster Aid, and many other forms of support for students in need," she said.

In addition to hardcore poor students, the Prime Minister announced that approximately 3,000 persons with disabilities (PWD) in public universities (UA), polytechnics, and community colleges will receive free education with immediate effect.

Professor Ts. Dr. Yatimah said that free education for PWD students focuses on their full participation throughout their studies until graduation within an inclusive and comprehensive ecosystem.

"UMPSA also provides nonfinancial support such as community centre services through the Inclusive Technology and Ecosystem Hub (HATi), academic support, psychosocial assistance, welfare guidance, and access to inclusive facilities and support services.

"This effort is implemented through a holistic approach to ensure that OKU students are not only able to enrol and pursue their studies, but are also able to complete their studies.

"UMPSA is at a ready stage and is being progressively strengthened in terms of disability-friendly infrastructure," she explained.
She added that basic facilities such as physical access, wheelchair pathways, lifts, disability-friendly

toilets, and adaptations of learning spaces have been provided in main buildings.

“Furthermore, with the support of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), UMPSA, through the Inclusive Services Centre (PPi) and PPDK DAMAi@UMPSA, continues to enhance existing facilities in line with universal design principles and the diverse needs of PWD students.

“In the long term, this initiative will produce PWD graduates who are more competitive, independent, and ready to contribute to the job market and society.

“The announcement of an additional 5,000 student accommodation units and improvements in the management of Form Six and Matriculation under MOHE beginning in 2027 will also enhance student well-being,” she added.

UMPSA also welcomes the guarantee of places for outstanding students and the strengthening of General Studies (MPU) in Bahasa Melayu with emphasis on the Constitution and Malaysian History to produce graduates who are knowledgeable, possess integrity, and uphold national identity.



“UMPSA fully supports the Malaysia Higher Education Plan (RPTM) 2026–2035 as the foundation for transforming national higher education.

“Through the development of high-performing talent, the empowerment of advanced TVET, and leadership in the sustainability agenda, UMPSA is committed to producing holistic graduates who are globally competitive for a sustainable future.

“UMPSA records its appreciation to the Prime Minister, Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim, and the Minister of Higher Education, Dato’ Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abd Kadir, for the government’s commitment to strengthening national higher education through the launch of the Malaysia Higher Education Plan (RPTM) 2026–2035 as the main direction of national higher education for the next ten years,” she said.

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