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UUM deserves nominal quit rent

I REFER to "UUM faces strain in funds" (*The Star*, April 19) where it was reported that Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) which used to pay quit rent of RM150,000 is now made to pay RM1.8mil.

Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Azizan Abdul Razak had been quoted as saying that the annual losses of RM1.6mil had forced the Kedah government to revert the quit rent to the original rate.

The state government should consider that it is dealing with an institution that is providing higher education and professional training to about 23,000 students a year.

The state should allow such institutions to carry on their business without having to worry about an added financial burden.

UUM, which started off with the aim of providing management education about 20 years ago, has now diversified and produces graduates in a variety of subjects that are related to the development of human resources for the country.

The university is also making a name among foreign students and visiting scholars. This contribution should persuade the state government to give a special rebate on quit rent to UUM.

Being a government university, the cost of education for local students has been kept considerably low. Any additional expenses would eventually result in higher costs and thus affect the students from the less fortunate homes. The government should prevent such a situation.

UUM is an iconic institution in Kedah that has been a catalyst to the development of Sintok and neighbouring areas like Changloun. The direct and indirect revenue spurred by the university more than justifies a nominal quit rent to be granted to UUM.

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