



Masidi speaking to participants of the PEREKA 2011 exhibition.

Masidi urges UMS to open outlet to sell its world class products

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) should open an outlet in the state capital to sell its products, especially food products that are made with what are naturally available in the state.

Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Masidi Manjun said he was amazed and impressed with what the participants of the annual UMS Research and Innovation Competition (PEREKA 2011) had produced.

"The products are beyond expectations and after going through the exhibition, I can see that UMS can earn a good income by selling these products, especially those that are food related," he said.

Masidi was of the opinion that some of the products are world class and even better than world famous brands.

His ministry, Masidi said, would assist in marketing the products through its extensive global networking.

On the competition, Masidi said it was a venue to tap into the minds of UMS staff and students so that they could come up with something that was beneficial and useful to

humanity.

He was amazed to taste food products that were made from what are usually discarded, like the skin of the pomelo which can be made into an ingredient for making cakes and beverages.

Masidi was also very taken by the 'pegaga' flavoured ice-cream as well as the research on the 'bambangan' seed kernel which showed that it has non-toxic cancer Chemopreventive and Cytoprotection agents.

"The good news is that all these products are abundant in Sabah so it is my hope that more products can be invented," he said.

Meanwhile, UMS Vice Chancellor Prof Datuk Seri Panglima Dr Kamaruzaman Ampon said there were 294 entries comprising 175 research and 119 innovations for PEREKA 2011.

His speech, which was delivered by deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) cum organising chairman Prof Dr Rosnah Ismail, disclosed that there was a 17 per cent increase in the number of participants compared to last year.

"I am proud with the

increase as it positively reflects the university's efforts to make research and innovation a culture among lecturers as well as students. This is also in line with UMS' aim to be a research university in the near future," he added.

According to Kamaruzaman, since 2008 to last year, a total of 225 UMS lecturers have been actively involved as head researchers and they have received a total of 287 grants worth RM21.3 million through the science fund grants from the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) from the Higher Learning Ministry as well as from local and international sources.

UMS, he said, had successfully obtained research grants totaling RM10.4 million and RM3.4 million were from outside sources.

Dr Rosnah told reporters later that the gold and silver medal winners of PEREKA 2011 would represent UMS at the national and international level research and innovation competitions.