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KOTA KINABALU: Since the introduction of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATIP) Act 2007, Malaysia's status in the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report has improved from Tier 3 to the Tier 2 watch list in June 2010.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Deputy Vice Chancellor, Assoc Prof Datuk Dr Kassim Md Mansur said that the introduction of ATIP has paved the way for law enforcers to combat the human trafficking problem.

He said efforts to capture and prosecute those involved in human trafficking as well as providing protection to victims are able to be carried out more effectively in ac-

Introduction of ATIP helps to combat human trafficking

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cordance with international protection guidelines.

"Human trafficking has long been an issue, even in Malaysia and modern technology especially the internet has allowed opportunists to manipulate and take advantage of human weaknesses," he said.

Kassim said this in his speech at the closing ceremony of an awareness campaign on 'Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants in Institutions of Higher Learning',

held in UMS yesterday. His speech was delivered by UMS Director of Entrepreneurial Development Centre, Mat Salleh Ayub.

The campaign was jointly organised by the UMS Deputy Vice Chancellor Council Secretariat, Counseling and Career Guidance Division, UMS Student Affairs Department, UMS HEPA Deputy Dean Council and the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).

Kasim said university students must understand and be exposed to current issues faced by the nation.

The academics, on the other hand must be creative in examining how people become victims of human trafficking and to find a more effective solution, he said.

"We are very proud because the government has enforced the biometric system through the Immigration Department to monitor foreigners entering into Malaysia.

"However, even though the government has introduced various measures to stop human trafficking, the economic condition and weaknesses of the country of origin of human trafficking victims have made them easy to be manipulated," he said.

Kasim urged the public to give their full support to enforcement agencies in their efforts to eradicating human trafficking as well as creating a stable political, economic and social environment for the country.