

Graduates urged to prepare for challenges and competition

By AFEIZA KHAN

KOTA KINABALU: University graduates are told to be prepared in facing the challenges and competition in the light of pending globalisation.

The use of information communication technology (ICT) hastens competition in the search for knowledge, skills and expertise among world communities.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice Chancellor Tan Sri Professor Dr. Abu Hassan Othman said the development of globalisation has created a new paradigm in the progress of the human civilization that defies borders.

"Therefore, I would like to remind graduates to be prepared in facing these challenges and the competitive environment," he said.

Dr Abu Hassan said this to 681 graduates during the first session of the 5th UMS Convocation at the newly built UMS Convocation Hall yesterday.

He said graduates should not think that success was already achieved after merely receiving a piece of graduation certificate.

"Career and real life challenges are far more challenging," he said. Hence, he said graduates must equip themselves to succeed in overcoming future obstacles.

For one, he said the mastering of English and other foreign languages added to one's competitive abilities because it was the international language of communication.

In strengthening their inner qualities, he said graduates needed a 'software of success', which meant achieving inner success.

"This involves positive values such as adroitness, discipline and responsibility towards a job that has been entrusted to you," he said.

In making excellence a living culture,

he said graduates also should adopt a life-long learning attitude even after they started working or when pursuing higher education.

Meanwhile, Dr Abu Hassan said in preparation for looming globalisation and economic liberalisation, UMS has created programmes and activities that were global in nature.

For example, he said UMS through its student attachment programme has sent students from the Borneo Marine Research Institute to various universities including the renowned Kinki University in Japan.

"Global exposure among students whether through student exchange programmes or studying while visiting will continue," he said.

He also said the university's co-operation at the international level has also seen an improvement.

To date, he said UMS has worked together with 50 universities including prestigious private institutions on teaching and learning, research and student and faculty exchange programmes.

In terms of research, Prof. Abu Hassan said UMS has received several grants and has succeeded in commercialising some of its potential findings including research on seaweed at the Borneo Marine Research Institute, Kacip Fatimah at the Biology and Tropical Conservation Institute and low cost housing development at the School of Engineering and Information Technology.

He also said UMS's efforts to enrich its education programmes would be given continued focus in order to achieve a world-class university status.

"This includes offering new subjects such as the Medical Undergraduate programme that started during the 2003/2004 session," he said.

Where the quality of education was concerned, Prof. Abu Hassan said UMS has managed to attain the status of MS ISP 9000.

"UMS is also actively working towards achieving the status of MS ISO 9001, 2000 version in management of faculty and learning," he said.

Meanwhile, he said the university hoped that graduates would contribute back to community and national development in the near future.

He was confident that those who graduated yesterday were capable in shaping the nation's development in 17 years to come or by year 2020.

Dr Abu Hassan also reminded graduates to maintain ties with the university through involvement in Alumni activities.

"Those of you who have started work or are about to do so, please look after the good name of the university wherever you are," he said.

The UMS 5th Convocation Ceremony witnessed a total of 2, 408 graduates receiving their degrees.

Out of the 681 that graduated during the morning session, four students received their doctorate and 21 their Masters while the rest obtain their Bachelors.

The ceremony also saw Professor Emeritus Masao Kawai receiving an Honorary Doctorate of Biological Science.

UMS Chancellor Head of State Tun Haji Ahmadshah Abdullah handed out the certificates to the graduates.

Another 625 graduates were given their degrees during the afternoon session while the remaining 1,100 graduates received theirs this morning.

Also present at the ceremony were the wife of the Governor Toh Puan Hajah Dayang Masuyah Awang Japar and UMS Board of Director Chairman, Tan Sri Hamid Ego.