

Rahim urges UMS to publish more quality academic editions

By KAMARUDDIN LIUSIN

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) should publish more academic editions of quality in order to meet international standards said Minister of Agriculture and Food Industry, Datuk Abdul Rahim Ismail.

He said the wealth of natural resources in the state made it an ideal topic for research and study particularly in the field of agriculture-based food production.

Speaking at the UMS 2003 book launch here yesterday, Abdul Rahim said he was confident from the research conducted much knowledge could be culled and published into editions of commercial value.

"I say this because in UMS there are various schools such as the School of Food Science and Nutrition, School of Science and Technology, Borneo Marine Research Institute and Biotechnology Research Unit that have the means to do integrated research and development," he said.

An integrated R&D would not only benefit the university but the country too, added Abdul Rahim.

Therefore, he assured the government was prepared to provide incentives and assistance to encourage the effort so that new products can be made.

Such incentives were also mentioned in the 2004 Budget recently which included among others tax exemption on royalties received from research work.

Earlier, UMS vice chancellor, Prof Tan Sri Dr Abu Hassan Othman said last year the university obtained several grants for research such as the Fundamental Research Grant from the Education Department which totalled RM2 million.

Of that amount RM1.9 million have been spent on 95 research projects.

Other sources came from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment which gave RM3.1 million for projects classified as Intensification of Research in Priority

Areas.

The Darwin Initiative Organisation, Prime Minister's Department, Ministry of Rural Development and the Sabah government had also provided financial assistance for research studies.

However, Dr Abu Hassan said there was still much to be done in terms of research and publication of study books before UMS could achieve the status of Research University.

He said enhanced teamwork between the senior and junior researchers was necessary so that the latter could produce quality work and publish materials of international standards.

As such UMS will stay focused on research work as its niche particularly in maritime technology, production of quality seaweed and spawning of grouper fries.

Since its inception in 1994, UMS has published some 100 editions of both academic and non-academic materials.

Yesterday saw 32 of those editions officially launched.