

Students urged to start fight for change now

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KOTA KINABALU: Students, who are future leaders of the nation, are urged to start their fight for change now.

Speaking when launching the inaugural Forum Belia Madani at University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) here on Saturday, Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Ts Mustapha Sakmud said such programme is able to provide the students with a new space to raise and discuss issues affecting them.

He said among the issues that can be discussed through this platform is the current water supply problem at UMS, and while he acknowledged that water is a basic necessity, he also reminded them that there are other dimensions to consider which will shape their future.

The Sepangar Member of Parliament (MP) said if the students wish to become future leaders, now is the time to start the shaping, instead of waiting until after they graduate and become leaders that they start to solve problems.

“When I was the Sabah Youth Council (MBS) president, we had held a Sabah Youth National Forum at UMS in 2010.

“At the time, we discussed the future of the newer generation, and we foresaw a pattern between the different



Nurul receiving a memento from Mustapha.

generations, from the baby boomers to the XYZ.

“That was 14 years ago, but we had already started to change our way to figure out a way to unite political leaders to sit at one table.

“At first everything went well at the Sabah Youth and Sports Ministry level - the then permanent secretary and minister were fine with it.

“But when we brought it up to the then Chief Minister, our proposal was rejected. He said the Opposition should act like one and should not be allowed to speak.

“I was then labelled as someone who tried to bring the Opposition into UMS.

“But we already had it outlined - we wanted for the Opposition

leaders at the time to think of cross-generational politics because eventually, all of us have to unite to lead the nation and state.

“And the reality that we can see now is that there needs to be cooperation among everyone.

“So this is what I mean when I tell students, who are the leaders of tomorrow, that now is the time to start shaping their future. No more dilly-dallying,” he said.

Meanwhile, Mustapha said there are still many problems to be solved regarding Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the country.

He said among the steps taken by his side to solve these problems is through cooperations with industries such as AirAsia, Telekom Malaysia and Tenaga

Nasional Berhad.

He stressed that such efforts must be industry-driven as they want to prevent TVET institutions from offering courses which are not aligned with industry needs.

“This is to ensure that we can provide the best facilities so that our students can take with them the things that they have learned at TVET institutions to the outside world once they graduate,” he said.

Among the panel speakers at the forum were Social & Economic Research Initiative (Seri) chairwoman Nurul Izzah Anwar, Ipsos Strategy regional head Kiranjit Singh and UMS senior lecturer (Economic Development) Assoc Prof Dr Janice Nga Lay Hui.