

'UMS must shed the kampung mentality'

By LESTER KONG

KOTA KINABALU: The staff and students of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) must do away with the "kampung" mentality or find themselves unable to compete in the global scene.

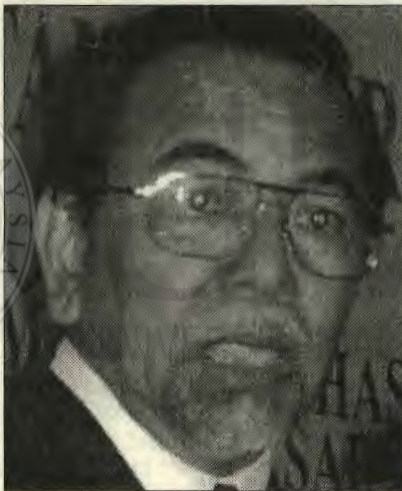
In his second annual message to the staff and students, UMS Vice Chancellor Tan Sri Datuk Dr Abu Hassan Othman strongly urged them to forget the "kampung" mindset.

"The globalisation process means that changes will come and we can no longer live in solitude, to be the 'juara kampung' (village champion) or communicate only among ourselves," he said here Monday.

He said that the institution must think in terms of achieving and maintaining excellence, which can come only through a paradigm shift in thinking and practice.

"With a paradigm shift, we will be able to think, work and do things more creatively and proactively," he stressed in his hour-long speech at the Premier Hall of UMS.

He also outlined the various education processes to be enhanced to achieve



Abu Hassan

a university of high quality and excellence.

"We must concentrate on four aspects of excellence, which are academic staff and undergraduate proficiency, excellent research and publications, as well as good human resource management," he said.

The common factor to improve

excellence in these four areas lies in the use of information technology, skill development and professionalism in working attitudes.

As one of the largest universities in the region, UMS has set its standards to be on par with the more prominent international universities.

To this effect, the university has linked with various foreign institutions of higher learning to expose the staff and students and encourage mobility towards the global world.

"Exposure through attachment training and learning visits to foreign countries will be continued and increased," Abu Hassan said.

"This is to expose students to the global scenario and raise their confidence to interact at the international level, even after their campus days."

He said the whole university must strive to build strong co-operation, integration and understanding among each other to raise its standards.

"We cannot possibly transform this institution into a prestigious university on our own without help from each other," he said.