

RM100,000 Tun Said Keruak Fellowship

16 March, 2005

Kota Kinabalu: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) received a RM100,000 fund as scholarship for post-graduate students under the Tun Said Keruak Fellowship programme.

Kota Belud MP, Datuk Salleh Tun Said, presented the cheque to outgoing Vice Chancellor Prof. Tan Sri Dr Abu Hassan Othman at the fellowship programme launch on Tuesday at the UMS Library auditorium.

The launch of the fellowship immortalises the interest in education by the late Tun Said Keruak, Sabah's fifth Chief Minister.

"Our father gave priority to education and as a result, us, his children and the people of Sabah today benefit," said Salleh, who is a former Chief Minister.

He said the family felt that it was only appropriate and timely that they immortalised Tun Said's high regard for education by establishing a fellowship named after him.

"This contribution is to fund post-graduate studies in UMS in any field, be it social science, economics, science and technology, medicine, engineering and so on," he said.

The late Tun Said Keruak was Chief Minister of Sabah from Nov 1, 1975 to April 13, 1976 and then the Head of State from January 1987 to December 1994.

"For me, personally, this contribution has its own historical significance because I, as a Chief Minister then, attended the ground-breaking ceremony of UMS by Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was then the Prime Minister of Malaysia," he said.

Salleh also hoped that Prof. Dr Abu Hassan, who would be retiring tomorrow (Thursday) could continue to serve the people and State in the education field in whatever way.

Meanwhile, Prof. Dr Abu Hassan, in extending gratitude to Salleh and the family for the contribution, said it was the first time that a university in the country had received a fellowship contribution although it was a normal practice in foreign universities.

"This is therefore a very significant contribution to intellectual development in the State," he said. During UMS' first convocation in 1999, he said, there were six post-graduate students who obtained their masters and two obtained their PhD.

Presently, he said, there are 945 post-graduate students in UMS, including 53 students from 14 other countries. He also recalled Salleh's contribution to the university when he approved another 90 acres to make UMS' total acreage to 999 acres when he was the Chief Minister.

"You started with me in 1995," said Prof. Dr Abu Hassan who has served 10 years as UMS' first vice chancellor. On the contribution of the hard cover book entitled "The Keruak Clan" to the UMS Library, he said it would go into UMS' annals of history and "the names would forever remain as a conduit to academic excellence".