

# Tourism industry will need 50,000 manpower by 2020 – minister

BP 07.08.2012 A2

**KOTA KINABALU:** Higher learning institutions will need to increase their annual output of hospitality personnel to 50,000 students by 2020 to ensure sufficient skilled personnel to meet the growth in the tourism industry.

At the same time, the share of graduates with diplomas or degrees will also have to be increased from 13 per cent to 50 per cent in the same time frame.

Higher Education Minister Dato' Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin said 65 per cent of the projected 500,000 new jobs created in the industry would require vocational-based workforce and the remaining would need workforce with diploma and higher qualifications.

He said rapid growth must always be matched by a proportional increase in the skilled human resource pool.

"In Sabah alone, tourist arrivals have grown by 3.7 per cent in the first five months of this year, generating RM2.02 billion in tourism receipts," he said.

Khaled's speech was delivered by Universiti Malaysia Sabah

(UMS) vice chancellor Professor Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah, who represented Khaled at the launch of Malaysia Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Education (MyCentTHE) Sabah cluster here yesterday.

Based on the current statistics from the Tourism Ministry, Khaled said the industry was expected to grow from 24 million in 2009 to 36 million in 2020.

"To realise the full potential of the 'Malaysia, Truly Asia' brand, there can be no shortage of skilled industry personnel, and visitors to our shores must be given the best services available if they are to keep coming back," he pointed out.

MyCentTHE is a national initiative under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), which was launched and led by UCSI University with the aim of providing Malaysia's expanding tourism and hospitality industries with quality human capital.

INTI College Sabah, cluster leader of MyCentTHE in Sabah, has enlisted the five-star Shangri-La's Tanjung Aru Resort and Hyatt Regency Kinabalu as

partners to provide 10 months of work-based learning for students in the diploma programme.

Khaled stressed on the need to tap the talents and interests of those who would enter the workforce.

"I am confident that this can be achieved with the close ties and partnerships that are being forged between the institutions of higher learning and the industry to create a win-win situation."

Khaled also commended MyCentTHE for demonstrating a good example of public-private partnership where participating higher education providers have agreed to reduce their course fees by 25 to 30 per cent. Industry partners further contributed up to 30 per cent through the practical-work allowances.