

Ministry aims for 50,000 hospitality grads by 2020

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KOTA KINABALU: Rapid growth in all industries, especially in tourism, must have a proportional increase with the skilled human resource pool, said Minister of Higher Learning, Datuk Seri Mohd Khaled Nordin.

In relation to his, he said, the Tourism Ministry projects the industry will grow three folds by 2020 while arrivals are estimated to rise from 24 million in 2009 to 36 million.

Furthermore, in Sabah alone, tourist arrivals have grown by 3.7 per cent in the first five months of 2012, generating RM2.03 billion in tourism receipt, he said.

“For Malaysia to realise the full potential of tourism, the ministry aims to increase its annual output of hospitality personnel to 50,000 students by 2020, while graduates with diplomas or degrees up from 13 per cent to 50 per cent at the same time,” he said during the launching of the Malaysia Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Education (MyCenTHE) Sabah Cluster, Monday.

His speech, which was read by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah, also stated that the Government and private sector are currently aligning their effort to make the country an education hub.

“For the record, 17 entry point projects (EPPs) have been identified by the Education National Key Economic Area (NKEA) to raise the overall education standards and deliver significant results leading to the year 2020,” he said.

Khaled said innovative human capital development will be fundamental to transforming the country – as envisaged in the New Economic Model – into a high-income nation and competitive in the global scale.

He said to do this comprehensive approaches, like innovation-led, knowledge-



Khaled

based economy, should also be in place to develop, attract and retain highly specialised human capital.

“Out of the number of new jobs created in the industry 65 per cent will require vocational-based and remaining will be diploma or higher workforce. We need to tap on talents and interests of those who will enter the workforce,” said Khaled.

He said only through the forging of a public-private partnership could the industry create such a win-win situation.

Citing as example the MyCenTHE, he said the collaboration is one way the goals set could be met.

MyCenThe is a national initiative under the Economic Transformation Programme, led by the UCSI University, with the aim of providing Malaysia the quality human capital needs of the tourism industry along with partnering hotels.

Participating universities in the programme have agreed to reduce their course fees by 25-30 per cent while hotels will contribute 30 per cent through work allowance.

Furthermore, loans under the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PIPTN) would allow up to 100 per cent financing to students.

“Partnering hotels and resorts will provide the students with around 10 months of unparalleled industrial exposure throughout the course and would put them in good stead for successful career paths,” Khaled said.

It is the fourth cluster of the MyCenTHE to be launched. The first three are in Sarawak, Kuala Lumpur and Penang and to date has about 200 students.

The Sabah cluster collaboration, meanwhile, involved collaboration between Inti International University & Colleges, Shangri-La Tg Aru and Spa and Hyatt Regency Kinabalu.