

# UMS urged to increase intake of students from lower income families

By IZHAM WAIDI

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has been told to accept more students from poor families as there has been no increase of student intake from that category since 2013.

Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment, Datuk Masidi Manjun (pictured) noted that for the 2013/2014 session, there was an intake of 94 students from the B40 group or lowest 40 per cent household income group.

That number dropped to 93 for the 2014/2015 session and again to 89 for the 2015/2016 session.

In urging the university to accept more students from the B40 group, he said: "As the people of Sabah we should go down to the ground to help young people and natives of Sabah who live in remote areas. We can help and bring them into mainstream education which has become more challenging," the Minister said at a function with B40 students held at the university's Chancellery Hall on Thursday night.

Masidi, whose portfolio includes matters on education in Sabah, was confident that the selected students were indeed eligible based on criteria that range from family income and number of dependents to



whether the parents are working, single-parent or if the student is an orphan. Accommodation and transportation are also taken into consideration when providing assistance to the students.

In his speech to the students, Masidi reminded the students not to allow poverty to become an obstacle for them to better their lives and have a bright future.

"With this help rendered to you, I hope it will not be put to waste. This is a platform for you to make something of yourselves and to make your families proud," he said.

UMS Vice Chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr. Mohd Harun Abdullah hoped the Minister could extend suitable assistance and support to the B40 students.

"If there is help and support from him, the students will feel more encouraged and be able to do well in their studies," he said.

His speech was read by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Alumni, Dr. Ismail Ali.

During the gathering, students were able to pose questions to Masidi and share their views.



Masidi (front, seated centre) watches a video clip presented by the B40 students of UMS with Dr Ismail (seated, Masidi's left)