

Sabah highest in children born out of wedlock

# 'Likely illicit if sex among illegals'

DE 24/11/2011 10

**Mary Chin**

KOTA KINABALU: UMS Prof Dr Rosnah Ismail (pic) concurs with State Community Development & Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Hjh Azizah Mohd Dun that further studies and investigations should be done to confirm and validate the reported figures for children born out of wedlock in Sabah.

Sabah recorded the highest number with 41,490 followed by Selangor (18,983) and Sarawak (17,570) between 2008 and 2010.

"The statistics are alarming for Sabah. If true, I believe illicit sex among illegal immigrants has contributed to this state of affairs," she said.

Based on studies in UMS, Prof Dr Ismail, who is also Deputy Vice-Chancellor, said although traditional and religious values are found to be dominant among the communities in Sabah, there

are still many youths involved in premarital sex.

This, she added, has resulted in unwanted pregnancies leading to children being born outside marriage or baby dumping.

"We found that among the key factors for illegitimate births are high-risk behaviour on the pretext of enjoying freedom, lack of effective family control, IT progress and illicit sex among illegal immigrants," said Prof Dr Ismail who conducted the studies on Social Issues in Sabah between 2001 and 2002.

While strong parent-child relations influences character formation and helps in building a harmonious family that is free from negative social elements, she noted that easy access to pornography websites, viewing obscene video and the desire to experiment contribute to premarital sex and children being born out

of wedlock.

On Thursday (Nov 17), Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, Datuk Hjh Azizah Mohd Dun said in Beaufort that her ministry wanted to establish the veracity of claims that Sabah recorded the highest number of children born outside marriage between 2008 and 2010.

Towards this end, the ministry would liaise with the National Registration Department (NRD) in Sabah to obtain statistics on the actual number of children (born out of wedlock) who are Malaysians and those who are non-Malaysians.

"We want to project the true picture. We don't want Sabah to be wrongly labelled as a state with a lot of social problems. Once we get valid information, my Ministry will definitely conduct a study on the matter," she was quoted as saying.

