

Education needed to transform rural community — Ongkili

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KOTA MARUDU: The transformation of a rural community like Kota Marudu cannot occur without education being a catalyst of societal progress, said Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Panglima Dr Maximus Ongkili.

Dr Ongkili, who is also Kota Marudu member of parliament, said that five years ago Kota Marudu's goal was to have one graduate in every village who would become catalysts for their community's development.

The Kota Marudu parliamentary constituency has about 300 registered villages -- about 160 in the Kota Marudu district and 140 in the Matunggong sub-district.

"We want every village to have at least one graduate among them who will become an example to their community on the

importance of education for individual development. At the same time they will play an important role in developing their community when they serve the people with their knowledge and skills," he said at an education fair by Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) at the community hall here.

The education fair entitled 'A Step Closer to University' was organised by the Kota Marudu Parliament Office and UMS to encourage Kota Marudu students who have completed as well as those who will be sitting for their SPM and STPM examinations, to pursue higher education.

"We have achieved 90 per cent of this target and there are less than 30 villages that have not produced a graduate. Even the remote village of Kg Sg Magandai

has produced two graduates from Universiti Malaysia Sabah," Dr Ongkili added.

He said that Kota Marudu now aims to produce one graduate in each family by 2020 to further the effort to instil among the community the value of education to their progress and well-being.

Dr Ongkili also advised the students not to stop with a bachelor's degree but pursue their Master Degree and PhD as "there is no end to learning and education".

The fair also included programmes to encourage youths to take up volunteerism including the Innovation Catalyst (ICATs) programme by Yayasan Inovasi Malaysia, an agency under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, to attract youths to become catalysts of innovations in their communities.



Dr Ongkili having his blood pressure checked at one of the booths set up by UMS at the education programme held in Kota Marudu. Looking on is Matunggong assemblyman Sarapin Magana (left).