



Dr Harun (centre) presenting a memento to Dr Nor.

UMS to promote sustainable finance by generating own income

BP 30.7.13 All

By Jenne Lajjun

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) hopes to generate an income amounting to an equivalent of 30 percent of its overall expenditure by the year 2020.

According to UMS vice chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Harun Abdullah during a talk on generating income for public higher learning institutes (IPTAs) at the Chancellery Building near here yesterday, the move was in answer to the Education Minister's call to promote sustainable finance for universities in the country.

"The minister has said that universities of today must possess the entrepreneurial spirit and not be overly dependent on the government," he said.

"Aside from that, universities must have their own financial planning from 2014 onwards to 2020 and the plan must be ready before the end of this year," he said.

He added that this was among the initiatives of the government to encourage each university to spend according to their financial planning

"The government does not want universities to spend beyond what has been budgeted as the financial resource of the government is limited whereas the expenditure of the 20 IPTAs is growing annually," he said.

"Hence, UMS wants all of its departments, schools, centres, institutes and units to play their respective role in generating income for the university, he said.

Dr Harun also said that generating income does not encompass merely making money but also in promoting the savings culture.

"The university spends millions on wastage ... the cost of operating can be reduced," he said.

Meanwhile, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) director for the river and urban drainage centre, Professor Dr Nor Azazi Zakaria, said none of the 20 IPTAs in the country have succeeded in generating an income of 30 per cent of their overall expenditure.

He said that this could be addressed if the IPTAs encouraged entrepreneurship

within their institute and viewed the matter as more than merely a hobby.

"But the problem is that it is viewed as a hobby," he said.

Dr Nor then highlighted the various efforts that could be undertaken by a university such as UMS to generate its own income, among them the establishment of a cooperative within the university that could manage various business endeavours within campus.

He encouraged UMS to consider setting up a travel agency within the campus ground to help students arrange flight bookings and so on, and to consider establishing fast food shops such as KFCs or McDonalds within campus.

"Why shouldn't you set up fast food outlets here? They could rent a space from you," he said.

Additionally, academicians and researchers must also play their own respective role to generate income for the university. These folks could help generate income for the university through the sharing of their expertise during workshops and seminars, he said.