

UMS should raise own funds, says former chief justice

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KOTA KINABALU: Higher public learning institutions (IPTA) have been urged to become lean organisations like higher private learning institutes (IPTS).

The call was made by Tun Dato Seri Zaid Tun Azmi, the IPTA universities board of directors chairman during the IPTA Human Resource Conference 2014 (PESUMA 2014) held at the Promenade Hotel here.

He added that the move is imperative for the IPTAs as they have been given the task to raise their own revenue and reduce their costs.

"Today, the government requires IPTAs to be autonomous and raise its own revenue. The government will reduce its contribution gradually," he said.

"IPTAs such as UMS (Universiti Malaysia Sabah) must seek donations and raise its own funds

by going into business...some universities are faring well, but many are not," he said.

He cited that among the reasons the IPTAs were struggling were because they continued to retain inefficient staff.

"Inefficient staff cost money and may not increase revenue," he explained.

The cost of keeping an employee is not only confined to the salary paid to that person, but also the office space taken, electricity used, air conditioning, pension and medical benefits and so on, he said.

Zaid further mentioned that while human resources were assets to an organization, they also considered as liability at the same time.

"If an organisation has too many manpower, it tends to become less efficient...you have to get rid of inefficiency," he said.

Unfortunately, the government,

including IPTAs, have a different approach when it wants to get more things done -- when it becomes inefficient, it adds more manpower, he said.

"But, despite adding more manpower, it doesn't address the efficiency issue as no one is monitoring to improve it," he said.

Zaid shared that when he was serving as the Chief Justice of Malaysia, they reduced the supporting staff by about 310 people and yet, the efficiency improved.

"Everything improved because we introduced multi-tasking," he said.

Through multi-tasking, excuses that are often heard at government offices such as, "the officer/person in charge is not around. Can you come back tomorrow?" will cease to exist, he said.

"You will never hear such an excuse in let's say, a bank. No



Tun Zaki (right) receiving a memento from Abdullah at the 2014 Conference on IPTA Human Resource yesterday.

one say that the task belongs to someone else."

Zaid then urged IPTAs to set a key performance index (KPI) for all its staff and for its leaders to show good examples. At the same time, he also urged all supervisors to demand efficiency from all his or her subordinates.

"Learn to delegate your staff; encourage employees and subordinates to contribute their ideas," he said.

He added that supervisors and

heads of an organisation must take the blame if their subordinates failed to deliver.

"Don't put the blame on people... as chairman, if I don't make my people work, I have failed," he said.

He also stressed that it was the role of leaders of an organisation to be daring in implementing policies, or else, nothing will ever change.

"Listen to ideas from your people. Don't be the only smart

person around," he said.

He also urged managers to empower their staff and to define proper boundaries for their staff.

Zaid also urged IPTAs to constantly invest in training for their staff and for bonus and increment to be given based on the performance and achievements of their employees.

Also present was Universiti Malaysia Sabah registrar Datuk Abdullah Mohd Said.