

By DK RYNI QAREENA

KOTA KINABALU: Malaysia had undergone a transformation in its economic status from low-income to upper middle-income country over the last five decades.

The notable lift of economic status had also led to the reduction of poverty rate from 60 per cent in the 1970s to 1.7 per cent in 2013.

The achievement was further translated in the 0.4 per cent decrease of poverty rate particularly among the rural community as reported in the 2015 Budget and 11th Malaysia Plan (11MP).

State Rural Development Minister (KPLB) Datuk Radin Malleh said Sabah was no exception in the economic lift which was indicated through the continuous drop in its rate of poverty.

“On the State level, through the collaboration between all ministries, departments and State and Federal agencies, the poverty rate had shown significant decline from 19.7 per cent in 2009 to 8.1 per cent in 2012, 4.0 per cent in 2014 followed by 2.9 per cent in 2016.

“Sabah KPLB is committed to double its efforts to significantly contribute to the government’s intention of eliminating poverty at zero

per cent level towards the end of 11MP.”

Speaking during the launching ceremony of the National Resource Development and Rural Community 2018 Seminar (Pesolar 2018) here Monday night, he affirmed that the ministry would continue to elevate rural and local economic activities to improve the communities’ standard of living.

Since the inception in 1996, KPLB had become the major driver in developing rural areas through the implementation of several programmes including poverty eradication programme, rural development programme, Prosperous Village Programme (PKS) and community development programme among others.

“Under the poverty eradication programme, the ministry had carried out two initiatives namely Mini Estet Sejahtera (Mesej) and hardcore poor people’s housing project (PPRT).

“Meanwhile, PKS was initiated in 2014 to transform potential villages with large number of hardcore poor vil-

lagers; until 2017, PKS had been implemented in 41 villages,” he said.

He added that the ministry had also set 30 targeted villages across the state since last year which will see improvements in terms of suspension bridges, community hall, open hall, road structure and gravity pipes among others.

On the other hand, the community development programme provides training such as management and administration courses for heads of Village Security and Development Committees (JKKK) and Urban Development Committees (JKDB) as well as Sewing programme.

“The courses for JKKK and JKDB were conducted to provide better understanding on their roles and responsibilities apart from improving their leadership as leaders at grass root level.

A total of 82 courses had been organised since 2001 until 2017, participated by 8,075 JKKK and JKDB chairmen, deputy chairmen and secretaries; there are currently 2,853 JKKK and 132 JKDB in

all over Sabah.

The Sewing programme was introduced to help interested rural women to help increase their income through the field. Since 2001 until 2017, a total of 2,633 individuals had joined the programme.

Radin stated that all the efforts proved the government’s commitment in transforming rural folks to ensure the community would also get the taste of national transformation as a whole.

“For the time being, we are working on enhancing rural community in long-term integrated resource development by providing more opportunities to the community in various aspects such as capital assistance, advisory and marketing strategies.”

Speaking of Pesolar 2018, he said it served as a platform to exchange ideas, information and results among interdisciplinary researches related to rural community development particularly in Sabah.

“It is the ministry’s hope to witness rural folks succeed in



BETTER FUTURE ... Jabil (third left), Kamarudin (centre), Radin (3rd right) and Ismail (right) with other guests.

tandem with the urban community in terms of technology to further enable them continue their lives.”

The three day seminar jointly organised by Ethnographic and Development Research Unit, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Faculty of Humanity, Art and Heritage (FK-SW) and National Professors

Council will see over 100 presentations related to rural developments.

Also present during the launching ceremony were UMS vice chancellor Prof. Datuk Dr. D Kamarudin D Mudin, dean of FKSW Prof. Dr. Ismail Ibrahim, Pesolar 2018 chairman Assoc. Prof Dr. Jabil Mapjabil.