

UMS aims for excellence in research and innovation

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KOTA KINABALU: Vice chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Prof Datuk Seri Dr Kamaruzaman Ampon has urged for the research and innovation practices adopted to be continued by the university community to ensure that UMS will become a centre of reference for others and well respected as an institution nationally and internationally.



Kamaruzaman

Speaking at the UMS Research Appreciation Night, he said a university does not only function to create quality human resource but also to be excellent in its research and innovation activities.

"I take the opportunity to appreciate our academicians in their contributions towards research, to congratulate them for having the competitive spirit to conduct researches by acquiring education grants, having their works and products published - which had not only received recognition from our own country but also globally.

"This proves that UMS is capable of being on par with other universities that have long been established in this country," he said.

Kamaruzaman said, 626 academic staff have had the opportunity to attend domestic and overseas conferences last year and 359 of them have presented their research paperwork with some receiving the best paperwork presentation awards at the international level.

"UMS researchers have also participated in invention and design contests at the Malaysian Technology Expo (MTE), Invention, Innovation and Technology Exhibition (ITEX), Karnival Malaysia Inovatif Zon Sabah, BioMalaysia and the Seoul International Invention Fair 2010. They have bagged a total of 13 gold, 13 silver and 17 bronze medals.

"I hope the products that have gained recognition could be commercialised through smart partnerships with industry players," he added.

According to Kamaruzaman, last year UMS had received a total funding of RM9.2 million from the government through the Higher Education Ministry (MOHE), the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (MOSTI) and other

ministries to conduct 129 new research activities.

Almost RM1 million worth of external research grants meanwhile was obtained through smart partnerships with several institutions, private and international agencies.

Kamaruzaman said some of the research outcomes have been successfully patented and have been commercialised thus encouraging the university

to foster research networks with the private sector and industry players.

"We are also lucky that MOHE has created several new research grant schemes, such as the Long Term Research Grant, the Exploratory Research Grant and the Prototype Research Grant in addition to the existing Fundamental Research Grant, in line with the third pillar of the country's Higher Education Strategic plan which is to strengthen research and innovation under the Tenth Malaysian Plan.

"I hope lecturers who have yet to obtain research grants will take the extra effort to obtain them, not only through government sources but also from external sources," he added.

He said the product of a research is an academic material publication and is an important criteria to be taken into consideration to assess the quality of a researcher for promotion purposes.

Kamaruzaman hoped that researchers would increase their effort in creating more research paperworks and publishing it in high impact journals this year.

Meanwhile, UMS deputy vice chancellor (research and innovation) Prof Dr Rosnah Ismail said the appreciation night was the second held by UMS, where awards and incentives given would lift the spirit of the recipients to achieve excellence in the future.

Rosnah said although she was personally satisfied with the achievements by UMS researchers last year, she said the next step was to ensure that every school, institution and centre of excellence in the university could strengthen their research capabilities in order to answer the country's research requirements.