

# Great potential for aquaculture industry

**KOTA KINABALU:** There is great potential for the aquaculture industry to grow, be it in market demand, employment potentials or economic importance to the country.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah deputy vice-chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Dr Rosnah Ismail in saying this, said it was also important for the people to update their knowledge and skills in the industry which is becoming very competitive.

Speaking when opening the week-long aquaculture training programme for 30 lecturers from community colleges nationwide, yesterday, she said UMS was embarking on a major plan of action for

community engagement which includes public education, environmental awareness and training for entrepreneurship and self-employment, and assisting small and medium enterprises.

"Training of community in areas such as aquaculture is considered important. Training modules can be designed to inculcate a passion for lifelong learning and scientific knowledge for profitable venture in producing high quality aquatic food for which there is always demand in the country, especially Sabah," she said.

The intensive training programme, which is organised by UMS's Borneo Marine Research Institute

(BMRI) from May 17-21, is in line with the aspirations of Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin, who emphasised the importance of using science and technology to address the issues concerning fish production and seafood security.

"The first batch comprising 30 staff members of the Department of Community College Education of the Higher Education Ministry will be given a hands-on training in aquaculture.

"The week-long intensive programme will be conducted according to a structured curriculum that includes hatchery set-up, broodstock management, induced breeding, egg

collection, fertilization and incubation, larval rearing, grow-out culture, feeding, health management, water quality management and administrative and sales management," Dr Rosnah said.

She added that technical training so imparted would enhance the success rate of start-up aquaculture ventures and enhance the ability of farmers to harvest fish at a size which is most economically efficient and profitable in the marketplace.

"At a time when fish catch per unit effort is declining as a result of over exploitation, degradation of marine ecosystem and climate change there is a need for aquaculture to expand to diversify the economic base of the rural coastal communities," she said at the launching of the aquaculture training program for the community here yesterday.

She believes that the ongoing aquaculture programmes of education and research at BMRI and the availability of infrastructure will make it possible to deliver the teaching modules and develop human resources for a knowledge-based and sustainable development of aquaculture for community welfare.

In addition to the top modern techniques, the modules will also impart entrepreneurial abilities among the trainees to earn a decent living and support the food security initiatives.



Dr Rosnah receives a souvenir from Mat Mislah, a representative from the Community College.