

# Federal Education Minister's stance refreshing

By MOHD IZHAM HASHIM

**KOTA KINABALU:** Senior heads of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) welcomed Federal Education Minister, Dr Maszlee Malik's speech at Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) on Monday, saying the minister's vision for education carries a clear message that needs to be implemented effectively.

"I witnessed what was mentioned by the minister with regards to upholding autonomy in schools with responsibility, which also requires a high degree of ethics and integrity," said UMS Board Chairman, Datuk KY Mustafa, noting the two areas needs to be addressed.

He lauded the Minister's stance on giving priority to uplifting the standard of English language teaching among learners given the fact that mastery

of the global language is an important skill needed to compete internationally, as well as being the language of knowledge and medium of instruction for business.

Meanwhile, the UMS Vice Chancellor Datuk Dr. D. Kamarudin D. Mudin said four initiatives for Public Universities and Institutes of Higher Learning (IPT) stated in the ministers' speech will be adopted as the driving force of the University's efforts in moving ever forward.

"The four initiatives which include quality, autonomy, collaboration and internationalisation will become the foundation towards becoming an innovative public university at the global stage which is in line with the UMS vision since its inception," he said, and expressed hope all trustees can work to-

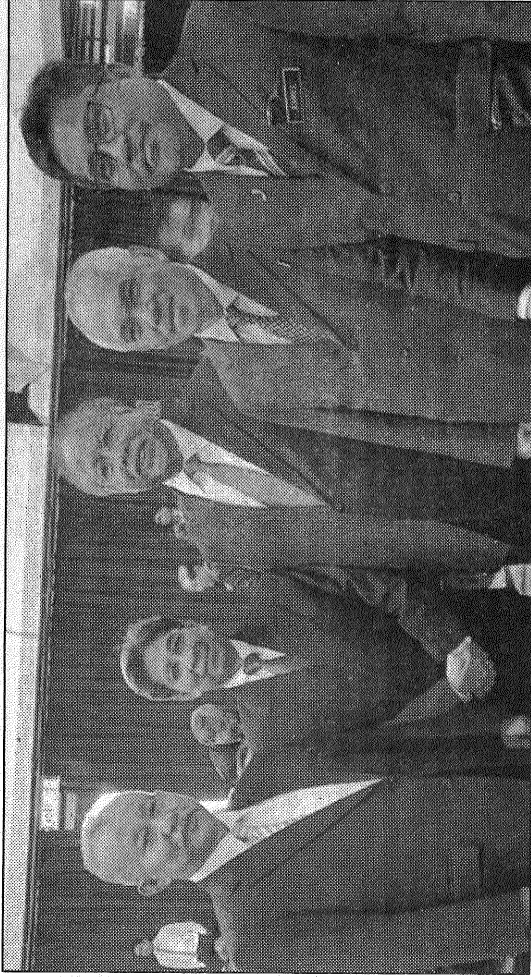
gether to realise the University's goals.

For Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International) Prof Dr Rashid Mail, he said the Malaysian Education Blueprint has demonstrated its relevance when the Minister's address touched on matters relating to policies.

"This not only encompasses hardware such as infrastructure but also software relating to delivery transformation, value systems, compassion, mutual respect and sustainability," he added.

With this, he underlined educators possessed a firm foundation to elevating the standard of education as the crucial component in national development and the generations to come.

"At the IPT level, emphasis on research activities with positive impacts to society and the country is a clear message



**CLEAR MESSAGE ... KY Mustafa (2nd left) who was present at the Federal Education Ministers' keynote address, together with Sabah Education Minister Datuk Dr Yusof Yaacob.**

which elevated the country's education sector in powering development and progress," added Dr Rashid.

For Sabah, he said people-centric as well as student-orientated approaches heralds a new beginning in improving the quality of rural education. "Accessibility, inclusivity, autonomy and enablers will provide a new synergy in the direction of education for the country in the year 2019," he said.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Prof

Dr Ismail Ali said the empowerment of university students is an important step to produce a generation of students who are articulate, with more freedoms but controlled in communicating their knowledge.

"Through greater emphasis for self-reliant activities for students such as the establishment of 'Student Corner', this will pave the way to greater independence, and critical thinking skills in logical, matured and constructive debating culture," he said.

Ismail said students, upon graduation will be more prepared when stepping into the world of work which requires a competent, proactive and responsive workforce.

UMS Registrar, Vina Zahriani is timely and relevant to the University's endeavor in producing holistic graduates, adding passion for knowledge are important attributes that could serve as the catalyst to the teaching and learning landscape.