

# TIME FOR UNIMAS TO HAVE OWN HOSPITAL — ADENAN

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Adenan (centre) taking a question raised by reporters during the press conference. He is accompanied by Kadim (left) and Unimas deputy vice chancellor (student affairs and alumni) Prof Mohd Fadzil Abd Rahman. — Photos by Muhammad Rais Sanusi

KOTA SAMARAHAN: The time has come for Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) to have its own university hospital for training and development of young doctors and nurses, as well as to conduct medical research.

Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Adenan Satem, who made this suggestion, said Unimas has produced about 1,000 medical doctors.

“I think it is time for Unimas to have a university hospital. They are seeking to have that so we will be asking the federal government for funding to provide us with a university hospital.

“There are some universities that already have university hospital, although they were set up later than Unimas,” he said in a press conference after presenting certificates to graduates at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) 19th Convocation Ceremony here yesterday.

Earlier, during his speech, Adenan stressed to the graduates the importance of English proficiency, adding they must realise that English is not a colonial language, but is widely used around the world as the language in fields such as science, philosophy, technology and learning.

“We have not taken a suitable decision 10 or 20 years ago, where we gave priority to Bahasa Malaysia and not enough emphasis was given to English. Now its time for us to start a new policy to emphasise English and Bahasa Malaysia at the same time. We can raise both languages together. So in Sarawak, we emphasise English to be used together, of course, with Bahasa Malaysia. It will be easy if we are bi-lingual.”

Adenan said he was sad to learn that thousands of graduates in the country were not employed due to the lack of English proficiency, adding that nowadays, both foreign and local companies required employees with English proficiency.

On the setting up of Unimas, he said it was one of the wise decisions taken more than 20 years ago to have a public university in Sarawak, noting that over the years, Unimas had contributed a lot to Sarawak and Malaysia.

“That is quite an achievement not only due to Unimas vice chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi, but also his predecessors. We have also become an established institution, where people send their children here to study and gain experience.”

Adenan also encouraged graduates to pursue lifelong learning, stating that they should not stop pursuing knowledge after obtaining a bachelor’s degree, but should go on to master’s degree or even doctorate degree.

“As you graduate today, tomorrow, you’ll find out that the world is a little bit different from what you thought it was. It is not just theory and what you think of it, it is a reality. It is a challenging and competitive world but Unimas must have laid the foundation for you to face all challenges that come your way in the years ahead.”

Meanwhile, Kadim said Unimas was proud that they produced 3,919 graduates this year, bigger than last year when it produced only about 2,700 graduates. He said the number of pre-graduates this year was 3,572, while 347 were graduate degree holders and 45 of them were awarded doctorate degrees.

“We are proud with Unimas’ achievement because the numbers showed that more students had chosen to study in Unimas, whether it is for pre-graduate or graduate. We hope we will continue to be the students’ choice, in line with our mission to be the choice university for students and academicians.”

As a public university, he said Unimas would want to accept many students but they understood that the university was built and designed to cater for about 18,000 students, adding that anything more than that would not be conducive for the students.

Kadim noted that a total of 3,892 new students registered for the 2015/2016 intake, making the whole student population for this year 17,226 students, which exceeded the target of 15,000 students.

“Now, we have a student population of about 17,200 and in a short time, will achieve the 18,000 level. We provide hostels for almost 80 per cent of the students and we don’t intend to provide it to 100 per cent of our students because we want our students to stay with the community outside the campus.”

As for Unimas’ expansion plan, Kadim said Unimas had started collaborating with its partners to offer post graduate programmes in Kuala Lumpur, with its first intake in last September.