

# **ALREADY VICTIMS OF MASSIVE CORRUPTION, M'SIAN UNIVERSITIES REEL WITH MASSIVE BUDGET CUTS**

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## **- Malaysia Chronicle**

One of the key sectors in government to face budget cuts last October was higher education. Hidden under the populist measures of the BR1M people's aid scheme, higher pensions and a widening of zero-rated items under the goods and services tax introduced last year, education cuts are just starting to make their mark felt.

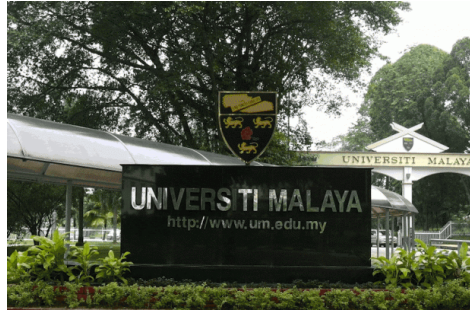
The education institutions' budgets were slashed by RM2.4 billion (US\$1 billion at current exchange rates) from RM15.78 billion in 2015 to RM13.37 billion for the year 2016.

These cuts have not been uniform. Cuts ranged from a high at Universiti Malaya at 27.30 percent down to Universiti Malaysia Sarawak at 1.05 percent cuts respectively. However, one university, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia actually got a rise in their budget with a 5.05 percent increase.

### **University Spending Cuts %**

Universiti Malaya 27.3  
Universiti Malaya Terengganu 23.76  
Universiti Teknologi Mara 23.72  
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris 20.78  
Universiti Utara Malaysia 19.31  
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia 17.14  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia 16.53  
Universiti Pertahanan Nasional 16.29  
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin 13.42  
Universiti Malaysia Pahang 11.18  
Universiti Putra Malaysia 11.41  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka 10.78  
Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia 8.11  
Universiti Malaysia Perlis 3.64  
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn 3.71  
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak 1.05

*Source: Malaysia budget*



One of the immediate problems with these budget cuts is the degree of them over such a short time. This gives some of the universities that received cuts above 10 percent very little time and latitude to adjust their spending patterns.

This could lead to crises in some areas of the education system like the teaching hospitals. The renowned University Malaysia Medical Centre (UMMC) which has been providing medical treatment to people who can't afford private insurance, will according to Universiti Malaysia's Dean of Medicine Professor Adeeba Kamarulzaman will be forced to cut back on both medical services and teaching.

The present crop of vice-chancellors are used to managing their respective universities from guaranteed budget allocations, where it hasn't been necessary to be too prudent with spending. They also have little experience in attracting other sources of revenue, other than their university budget allocations.

### **Corruption & wastage**



However the Ministry of Education is slowly retiring the 'old breed' of vice chancellors like Professor Kamarudin Hussin of Universiti Malaysia Perlis, who was exposed by Asia Sentinel last month for corruption, mismanagement and grandeur practiced at the university. Kamarudin attempted to stay on to his post as vice chancellor, using alumni to make an appeal to the minister of Higher Education Idris Jusoh. On the minister's insistence that he leave and take up a face-saving position as a special ministerial advisor, Kamarudin made a grand exit from the University last week, as evidenced by the pictures. This grand departure came at the same time the besieged Prime Minister Najib Razak called on all government departments and institutions to spend less on events and protocols.

Since his departure from University Malaysia Perlis, there has been considerable talk in the corridors about corruption. The incoming Perlis vice chancellor, who hasn't been selected yet, due to the sudden decision to remove Kamarudin will have his or her job cut out to eradicate the excessive waste and corruption that is being alleged by past and current staff. It is worth noting that the letter of appreciation for 14 years of service as vice chancellor was unusually not signed by the minister, but rather by the director General of the Ministry, Professor Asma Ismail. -

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