

# Graduates also need to have effective communication skills

**KUCHING:** University graduates must not only equip themselves with good academic qualifications but also effective communication skills to be marketable in the job market.

"Many graduates are unable to find jobs in big companies as officers, managers and executives not because of (lack in) academic qualifications but due to the lack of effective communication skills," said Deputy Minister of Higher Education Datuk Idris Haron.

He said graduates' achievement at any university was not measured by their academic excellence but by their ability to communicate effectively.

"We must remember that our achievement is not measured by excellent academic results but our soft skills must be taken into account when facing the job market," he added.

"It is through events like cultural shows that university students can develop leadership, organisational and communication skills," Idris said at the Malam Rumpun Budaya in University Square on Friday.

Idris said the tests and challenges faced by university graduates were getting tougher as there were a lot of educated and smart people around.

He said as far as the ministry was

concerned, the country had achieved much progress in the education field as there were now 21 public universities and more than 500 private institutions of higher learning compared to only one university - University Malaya - in the 1960s.

Idris also noted a worrying trend in the sex ratio among students at universities in the country.

"At Universiti Sains Malaysia, for example, the ratio is one boy to every three girls whereas in Universiti Technology Malaysia about 60 per cent of the new 4,600 student intakes are girls, and 75 per cent in Universiti Daruliman Terengganu," he revealed.

In Unimas, 68 per cent of the 1,500 students registered for the 2008-2009 session are girls.

Earlier, Unimas vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Khairuddin Ab Hamid said the evening function (Rumpun Budaya) was organised to promote racial unity among the students and to give them a chance to get to know, love and respect the cultures of the multiracial society of Malaysia.

It was also held in conjunction with the students' orientation week.

Khairuddin said Malam Rumpun Budaya served as a platform for students of all races to mix and communicate with each other.



**CULTURAL SHOW:** Idris (right) and Khairuddin enjoying a cultural performance.