

Headline	UiTM aims to be a research university of repute		
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UiTM aims to be a research university of repute

KUALA LUMPUR: A research university with a difference — that's what Universiti Teknologi Mara aims to be by 2010.

UiTM vice-chancellor Datuk Seri Prof Dr Ibrahim Abu Shah said the difference would lie in the fact that the university would stress innovation and entrepreneurship.

"These are our strengths. We have won the most number of awards at innovation expositions worldwide," he said.

Ibrahim said UiTM won 163 awards at various innovation expositions locally and abroad last year.

It was also the local university with the highest number of gold medals from these expositions.

"Just this year alone, until April, we have won 63 awards for innovation," Ibrahim said after UiTM's 68th convocation ceremony.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin, who is also UiTM chancellor, graced the ceremony. Higher Education Minister Datuk Khaled Nordin was also present.

Ibrahim said UiTM was ranked fifth in the country in terms of research.

The others were Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Ibrahim believed the university was capable of making its mark as a research university of repute.

The convocation also saw the graduation of UiTM's first batch of 19 medical students.

The medical faculty started with only 20 students and now has nearly 600 students.

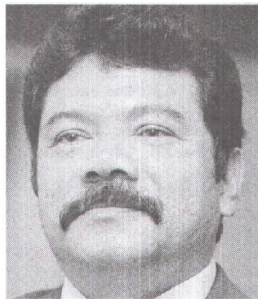
The advisory board to the medical faculty comprises experts from prominent medical universities abroad, including the Harvard Medical School in the United States.

The board visits UiTM once a year to review the curriculum and standard of the medical programme to ensure they are up to mark, Ibrahim said.

"So far, we have received positive feedback about our medical programme."

Asked about the development of the UiTM Hospital on the site of the

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UiTM vice-chancellor*

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former Sungai Buloh leprosarium, Ibrahim said that work was under way. The hospital was expected to be completed next year.

He said the former residents on the leprosarium grounds were happy with their new houses.

“Some of them even kissed my hand when they received the keys to their new homes.”

The issue over the preservation of the leprosarium became a hotly-debated issue when UiTM began construction work on the 16ha site last September.

The National Heritage Commission and non-governmental organisations had protested against the development and said the settlement should be preserved as a heritage site.

However, UiTM maintained that the Health Ministry had approved the land for the construction of its medical and dental faculties.

Thirty-nine residents were affected by the development.

A total of 370 graduands from 16 faculties received their degrees from Tuanku Mizan.

UiTM will hold 12 more convocations until May 31 to confer degrees on more than 10,000 students.