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Varsities unlikely to make top 200 list

PETALING JAYA: Will a Malaysian university make it to the top 200 list in the world this year?

Sources say that it is highly unlikely as local universities still need time to implement their respective development plans with the aim of becoming world-class institutions.

All will be revealed when the Times Higher Education-QS World University Rankings 2008 is released on Oct 9.

Last year, no Malaysian university made it to the top 200. Universiti Malaya (UM) was the highest ranked local institution at 246, followed by Universiti Sains Malaysia at 307, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) at 309 and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) at 364. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia broke into the top 500 for the first time, and was placed at 415.

UM vice-chancellor Datuk Rafiah Salim said the university hoped to see an improvement in

its performance following the implementation of its strategic plan last year.

UKM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin said the university had been executing its transformation plan, with emphasis on research, publication and international paper presentations, among others.

"We have been making steady progress. If this is reflected in the rankings, well and good," she said.

UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Nik Mustapha Raja Abdullah expressed the hope that the compilers would use the same criteria as last year.

"If this happens, we hope to do better," he said.

In a press release QS said that 33 nations are represented in the top 200 universities, compared to 28 last year.