Vice-chancellors not too concerned

According to Nik Mustapha, UPM had set their target to get on the top 200 list by 2015. UM acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Muhammad Nasir Muhammad said that the university has its own transformation plan in place, "that may think we have done good, when that may not be the true picture. It is good sometimes to have our performance measured by others."

UM hopes to make it to the top 200 list by 2010. LSSM deputy Vice-Chancellor (academic and international affairs) Professor Ahmad Shukri Mustapa Kamal insisted that he did not know the university's ranking but was told that it had "dropped a few places".

"It is always difficult to comment when one drops in rankings because if you start to question the rankings or justify the drop, the excuses will certainly not be acceptable."

"There has been some perception, however, among many universities not in the top 50 that the rankings have been rather volatile."

"I have always been from the school of thought that this ranking is useful but it is certainly not absolute."

Ahmad Shukri added however, that they would need to "scrutinise the data further to see what the reason for the drop is."

Despite claims that the criteria and evaluation process are flawed, the THE-QS ranking would still continue to influence those who are considering furthering their studies either at local or foreign universities. — By Jennifer Gomez and Irshadi Mohd Salleh