

RM600mil boost for five research universities

THE Government will allocate RM600mil to the five research universities to conduct high-impact research in strategic fields such as nanotechnology, automotive, biotechnology and aerospace.

Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said research and development (R&D) activities would continue to be emphasised.

Universiti Sains Malaysia vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Omar Osman said this was a positive move for research universities and a long-term commitment realised by the Government.

"This will help the university to move forward in research, innova-

tion and commercialisation," he said.

Universiti Putra Malaysia vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Radin Umar Radin Sohadi said the RM600mil allocation would further enhance the institution's research, post-graduate and innovation agenda.

"UPM is a lead university under the Aerospace Malaysian Innovation Centre, which is a consortium established via the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology to spearhead research into the aerospace industry together with global players," he said.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Zaini Ujang said the allocation was a strategic investment to allow innovation to blossom in Malaysia.

"It provides an ecosystem for intellectual capability as well as a high-end job market and intangible wealth creation," he said.

Universiti Malaya vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon said the university already had strong ongoing research into biotechnology and nanotechnology.

"We are looking into employing at least 200 post-doctoral fellows over the next three years in these areas," he said.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

vice-chancellor Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin said the budget has taken technological innovations for wealth creation to a higher level.

"We are also happy with the incentives for the commercialisation of research products which apply to university start-ups as well," she said.

She was referring to the proposal that the current tax incentives for the commercialisation of resource-based R&D findings be extended to non-resource based findings, which are products promoted under the Promotion of Investment Act 1986.