

# Local public universities maintain fees

THERE will be no increase in fees for undergraduate programmes in Malaysian public universities despite the drop of RM2.4 billion in the budget allocation for higher education next year according to Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh.

Idris said: "Public universities will not be affected by the budget although their reliance on government funding is 75-90 per cent, as most are already generating their own funds from various resources."

"By 2025, these universities are targeting to generate their own income and funding."

"There are various initiatives by universities to generate funds through endowments, commercialisation of assets, expert consultancy and research and development R&D."

He added: "The R&D funding for public universities, for instance, is still maintained with the same budget of last year's RM476 million."

University of Malaya (UM) is the best example of successfully generating 30 per cent of its operating costs through commercialisation of assets in plantation industry investment and business interest in the UM Specialist Centre, UM

Centre for Continuing Education and International University of Malaysia-Wales.

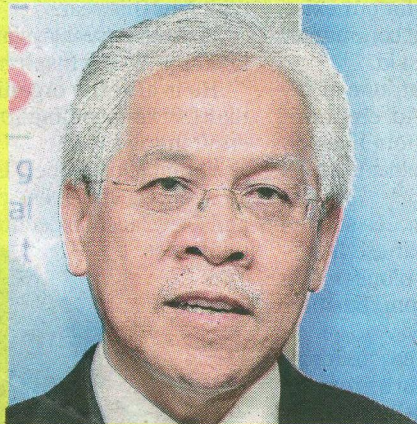
UM vice chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohd Amin Jalaludin said: "Currently 30 per cent of UM's operating expenditure is being funded by its business interests. Funding is generated through investments in a few lucrative sectors such as the plantations business industry. UM's objective is to become financially self-sustainable and generate 50 per cent of its own funds by 2025."

Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) vice chancellor Professor Tan Sri Sahol Hamid Abu Bakar said: "Two years ago, the Higher Education has mandated that universities generate up to 30 per cent of their own funding."

"UiTM is already targeting its 600,000 alumni members to contribute to the RM1 billion Education Fund."

"I am confident that public universities are capable of generating their own income."

Idris said that through its Stanley Ho Alumni Challenge, Hong Kong University (HKU) is an example of a tertiary institution which has succeeded in generating its own funds. Launched in



**Idris Jusoh**

2005, for every HK dollar donated by HKU Alumni, Dr Stanley Ho (an alumnus of the university) pledged to match the amount. By 2010, HK\$1 billion was successfully collected with half of the amount from the alumni and the other half from Ho.

Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) vice chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Omar Osman said: "Cost-saving initiatives as well as efforts to generate funds through R&D, industry collaboration and commercial-

isation are under way, including increasing endowments and donations through Yayasan USM."

"Students need not worry about rumours that the fees for undergraduate degrees will be increased."

In between 2007 and 2012, RM1.25 billion has been generated by the five Malaysian research universities — UM, USM, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. The return of investment from these universities is RM5.33 billion (50.6 per cent) from the government's initial investment of RM3.53 billion.

Currently, Malaysian public universities' reliance on government funding is 50 per cent of the world's average among universities.

In comparison, other top universities such as Imperial College London's reliance on government funding is 40 per cent and Thammasat University in Thailand is only 30 per cent.

With regard to endowment, top ranking universities like Harvard University, for instance, has collected some US\$36 billion and Yale University, US\$23 billion.