



Khairy (centre) and UPM Vice Chancellor Datin Paduka Dr Aini Ideris during the 2016 National Youth Day pre-launch at Menara KBS, Putrajaya, yesterday.

## National Youth Day festival shifts venue to UPM

**PUTRAJAYA:** The recent budget recalibration, which saw the government slashing its allocation across the board, has forced this year's annual National Youth Day festival to move away from its usual, iconic venue in Putrajaya.

Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said instead, this year's May 15 celebration would be held in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in Serdang.

"Of course (the change in venue is because of the allocation cut). We have to reprioritise a bit. When we did it in Putrajaya, the cost was quite high. Here (UPM) we can save quite a lot.

"If we want to maintain the location in Putrajaya, we have to do it full-heartedly. So, I think it is only better if we focus our resources elsewhere. But I'm not brushing aside the possibility of returning it to

Putrajaya next year," he said after the pre-launching of the 2016 National Youth Day themed "The Future Is Now".

Khairy was unable to disclose the final cost of the festival, but confirmed that it was much less than previous years.

He was, however, confident that the change in venue would not hamper or affect the turnout of visitors to the festival, assuring that the quality would be just as good, if not better.

"This is because we will also have a Youth Week (from May 9 to 14), with 140 different programmes nationwide, down to grassroots level, which will see larger participation.

"It's a different feel, because we don't have one concentrated celebration like in Putrajaya, but that doesn't mean we are not having the celebration throughout the country." — by **Amar Shah Mohsen**