

# 'Cuts prompt varsities to get own financing'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The budget reduction for public universities next year was expected, said Universiti Putra Malaysia Faculty of Economics and Management Associate Professor Azmawani Abd Rahman.

She said the reduction was consistent with the higher learning education blueprint's aim to reduce the dependency of public universities on government funding.

"If you benchmark with public universities outside Malaysia, government funding for those universities is much lower.

"To be sustainable, universities should generate their own income. We are too reliant on the government for financial support."

Azmawani, however, said reducing the budget for public universities should not come at the expense of the quality of education that students would receive.

"The reduction is in administration and operating expenditure. In terms of research grants, we are getting what we received last year," said Azmawani, who is also the deputy dean for research and graduate studies.

She said the faculty's strategy was to generate more income.

"We have started generating our own income this year. For next year,

we will create more income-generating platforms. We will double our efforts in securing private and public international grants.

"We realise the importance of commercialising our assets, such as pesticides developed by our students. We will do this through partnership with industries.

"At faculty level, we will offer training programmes to stakeholders by leveraging our staff expertise in finance, accounting, business operation and management, as well as leadership and human resources.

"An executive development industrial linkages unit has been established (in the faculty)

to provide training to government agencies and private companies."

Due to the economic downturn, businesses were cutting costs by reducing the number of employees sent for training programmes, she said.

"This is an opportunity for us to provide programmes for business professionals. The university has the facilities for training programmes.

"We can capitalise on those facilities to offer programmes at lower prices," she said, adding that the faculty had also developed programmes for postgraduate students who required specialised training.



**Associate Professor  
Azmawani Abd  
Rahman**