

M'sian varsities among top 100 in emerging economies

By SANDHYA MENON
educate@thestar.com.my

PETALING JAYA: Three Malaysian institutions made it to the top 100 of the Times Higher Education (THE) BRICS & Emerging Economies University Rankings 2017.

They are Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM).

The other four institutions that made it to the top 300 are Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and Universiti Teknologi Mara.

The THE World University Rankings editor, Phil Baty, said it is indeed great news that seven Malaysian universities made it to the list, up from four last year.

"This is the most competitive BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and emerging economies rankings to date with universities across 50 countries assessed.

"Malaysia invests a huge amount in higher education and has marketed itself as a knowledge economy and innovation hub in recent years," he said.

Baty also noted that Malaysia's public universities have been hit by

budget cuts of around 15% this year after the economy came under pressure from lower oil and commodity prices.

"Malaysian institutions will have to run faster just to stand still in this list in future years," he added.

UPM vice-chancellor Prof Datin Paduka Dr Aini Ideris said rankings are important as they allow universities to be aware of their progress as well as areas for improvement.

"It's one of the many means of knowing what and how we can continuously improve ourselves to be among the top universities globally," she told *The Star*.

Prof Aini also said rankings do

influence how stakeholders perceive the university.

"The results show that the varsity has been consistent in its scholarly achievements.

"The efforts and scholarly contributions by our staff have borne sweet fruits as we are one of the top research universities compared to other globally-renowned universities," she added.

Baty said UPM's rise is due to improved performances in research environment, research influence, and attraction of international talent.

UTP vice-chancellor Datuk Dr Abdul Rahim Hashim said the recog-

nition by THE is an accomplishment that the university is proud of.

"Indeed, 2016 has been an amazing year for the university and this recent achievement bears testimony to our hard work and diligence in the university's journey towards achieving global prominence.

"We will continue to strive up the rankings," he added.

Chinese institutions topped the list for the second consecutive year, with Peking University and Tsinghua University ranked first and second, respectively.

More can be found at www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings.