

02/08/1997

Chong Eu to USM: `Promote expertise`

Marina Emmanuel

PENANG, Fri. - Universiti Sains Malaysia Pro-Chancellor Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu tonight called on the university to promote its own expertise for the nation's development.

He said USM's ability to tap the talents of its staff, who, unlike their foreign counterparts, were better-versed in dealing with local cultures and its related problems, would pay off in the long run.

"The expertise available at the USM covering most areas of study, including drug counselling, clinical pharmacy, medicine, communications and information technology must be exploited," he said during USM's chancellor's dinner at Shangri-La's Rasa Sayang Resort.

Also present were Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, chairman of USM's council Tan Sri Ani Arope, its Vice-Chancellor Datuk Professor Ishak Tambi Kechik, former Federal High Court judge Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Zain and Malaysian AIDS Council president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir.

Koh, Abdul Aziz and Marina will be conferred honorary degrees by USM's Pro-Chancellor Tun Daim Zainuddin during its 26th convocation ceremony tomorrow.

Dr Lim, who represented the university's Chancellor the Raja of Perlis Tuanku Syed Putra at the dinner, said:

"USM's future development as an institution of higher learning can only be assured if it is able to actively and effectively promote education for society to progress."

Dr Lim said although USM's numerous achievements such as its equity participation in research and development activities augured well for this era of corporatisation, the university should not rest on its laurels.

"The responsibilities and challenges placed on USM continue to increase to meet the country's future needs," he said, adding that the university was no longer only placed in its traditional ranks of excellence in academia.

It was also in a position to offer its expertise to industries for the country's economic growth.

"These efforts need the support of all parties, including the private sector.

"Incentives and encouragement given such as tax rebates when utilising university expertise should be fully exploited to progress further in research and development," he said.

Meanwhile, Ishak said USM would assume a greater role in education in line with the nation's rapid development.

"While our accomplishments in research activities are the ones we can be proud of, I believe we can excel further," he said.

Ishak said in assisting the country as it moves towards industrialisation, institutions of higher learning had an important role to play through its research and development activities.

"USM's plans to forge ahead in this area will be accelerated with the setting up of a co-operative biotechnology and biopharmacy centre soon.

"We also hope the research grants received last year totalling over RM17 million will produce significant results for R&D in future," he added.

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