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Unity club for integration

By A. Hafiz Yatim

KOLEJ Universiti Teknikal Kebangsaan Malaysia's Student Affairs office may be only three years old but it has managed the affairs and well-being of 4,271 students pursuing diploma, degree and master's programmes efficiently.

Initially, it had four units - Sports and Recreation, Residential College, Welfare and Activity - when it was formed in 2001.

However, the Student Affairs office has undergone a restructuring and five more units have been added: Discipline and Special Functions, Religious, Counselling, Culture and Administration.

The college has the largest number of staff (60) manning the Student Affairs office among all government college universities.

Dean Associate Prof Dr Su'aidi Datuk Safei has headed the Student Affairs office since 2001, which looks after the affairs and activities of students.

"The office seeks to provide a service as well as develop students to be harmonious and well-balanced physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually.

"It also implements programmes to create well-disciplined, motivated and dignified students, ensuring that the welfare of students is always taken care of, and organises programmes for students.

He said despite the university being young compared with 16 other public universities, the unit recognised the importance of co-curricular activities for students in building their leadership skills.

He said being tomorrow's generation of leaders, students had to be equipped with leadership and other skills to become leaders in the community and the nation.

"Recognising this, students at the college are required to have two credits, one for each semester, that come from participation in co-curricular activities."

The university has 29 clubs covering academic, sports, self-defence, and religious societies.

They include the Students Representatives Council, Rakan Muda Secretariat, Unity Club, Dakwah and Spiritual Club, Debate and Oratory Club, Sabah and Sarawak Children's Association, Technocrat and Entrepreneur Club and Culture and Arts Club.

He said KUTKM was the first public university to form a unity club that sought to integrate the multiethnic, multireligious and multicultural student population. The club was formed in 2002 as a result of the vision and idea mooted by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

KUTKM board chairman Tan Sri Salleh Sulong, at the launching of the club, said the club's formation was appropriate considering the cultural and societal mosaic of society.

The club appointed Abdullah Shuhaimi Rozlan, Lee Yew Loon and Sarjeet Kaur Baldev as joint presidents, representing the three main communities in Malaysia.

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