

Paradigm Shift Needed To Make Malaysia A Global Hub For Higher Education
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 10 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has called for a paradigm shift in the academic world to fulfil the vision to make Malaysia a hub for higher education of global standard.

He called on academicians to be at the forefront in coming up with high-impact research and make innovation a pillar in instilling high-performance culture in universities.

He said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's announcement during the tabling the 2012 Budget, declaring 2012 as the Year of National Innovation Movement, should be taken up by academicians through the implementation of commercially-viable research and development projects.

"In this context, academicians should be at the frontline in coming up with new commercially-viable ideas.

"I hope that academicians who are experts in various fields will grab this golden opportunity and spearhead the National Innovation Movement announced by the prime minister," he said in his speech at the 2009/2010 National Academic Awards at Putra World Trade Centre, here.

Muhyiddin who is Education Minister said to encourage the culture of innovation among the people, the government had come up with strategic initiatives, with a funding of RM100 million, including to implement strategy to internalise innovation among public higher learning institutions.

He also urged the private sector to come forward and collaborate with these institutions in innovating new products to bring the country's economic value chain to greater heights.

"It is therefore appropriate for these institutions to double their effort in striking strategic collaborations with the industry to commercialise products from research carried out by academicians and to obtain patents and intellectual property rights on these products," he said.

In conjunction with the National Academic Awards, Muhyiddin also called on institutions of higher learning to facilitate academic mobility by encouraging scholars with expertise in certain fields, to be appointed to advisory and consultancy positions either in the public or private sector.

This would not only give them the opportunities to channel their expertise to organisations outside the university circles but also give them opportunities to expand their expertise for the benefit of their universities, he said.

"In the effort to bolster research and development programmes and consultations with the industry, it is appropriate for these institutions of higher learning to make mobility a part of the scholars' duties and functions," he said.

Through these initiatives, he said, academicians could contribute outside their academic circles more effectively.

At the event, former Science Advisor to former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Omar Abdul Rahman, was named the "Tokoh Akademik Negara."

He received RM80,000 in cash, a certificate and a trophy.

The award, incepted in 2006, is highest recognition to academicians who have contributed to the country in an exceptional manner.

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