

Fit workers to jobs: Masing

Minister fears state will lose out if mismatch between jobs and manpower persists

By Churchill Edward

KUCHING: The state will lose out if the current mismatch between jobs and manpower continues, Land Development Minister Dato Sri Dr James Masing said yesterday.

Expressing concern over the matter, he said society could only move forward much faster if its educated manpower matched its needs.

• See also Page 5

"No country can hope to develop if its citizens are not equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to power the nation forward," he said when launching the Universiti College Sedaya International-Utusan Borneo (UCSI-UB) Bumiputera Study Grant Programme at UCSI Kuching campus here.

He said there was a possibility that educated citizens without a job would use their brainpower to go after the authorities and harbour ill feelings towards the establishment.

He pointed out that the educated masses without relevant knowledge and skills especially in a Third World country could become a source of frustration and hence create problems for the country.

"Educated citizens without a job in which they are trained for will use their brainpower to go after those in authority and that is the beginning of the so-called anti-establishment feelings.

Masing said the state needed people with relevant skills and relevant knowledge.

"The emphasis here is relevance. Therefore it is now of great importance for planners who wish to develop our human capital to know firstly, what they want and secondly, the mechanics of achieving the objectives," he said.



FIRST RECIPIENT: Jasmin receives from Masing (right) a replica of the letter offering the study grant. Also seen are Ng (left) and Rujhan.

The minister said the development of human capital might be an expensive exercise but once set in motion, the fund for development of human capital could not be allocated somewhere else just because it was politically convenient.

"The development of human capital is a marathon race which requires energy, perseverance and a lot of money and smart thinking," he said, adding that he was glad the state government was putting a lot of emphasis on the development of human capital.

He hoped the initiatives taken by corporations, like the one involving UCSI and UB, would help fast-track Sarawak towards achieving greater development for its people, especially Bumiputeras in rural areas.

With the recent fuel hike and unavoidable rise in cost of living, the necessity for Sarawak to be able to build up more homegrown Bumiputera knowledge workers would become more relevant, he said.

Masing said: "I'm confident the Bumiputera community in this

country will rise above the challenges if they make full use of the opportunities provided by the state and also by grants such as the one launched today (yesterday) for skills development."

He said the launch of the UCSI-UB Bumiputera Study Grant was reflective of the healthy synergy between the media and an institution of higher learning to help provide educational opportunities so Malaysian human capital and in this case, the Bumiputera community, could harness their full capability and potential.

The generous grant whereby students studying in the fields of Information Technology, Logistics Management and Business would receive up to 100 per cent waiver of tuition fees would certainly help deserving students, he said.

The UCSI-UB Bumiputera Study Grant amounting to RM350,000 was aimed at lessening the financial burden of Bumiputera students who wished to further their studies at UCSI.

• See Page 4, Col. 3