KOTA KINABALU: Any person showing early symptoms of attempting to commit suicide must be helped immediately. Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) Psychology professor Dr. Rosnah Ismail said family members, relatives, friends and lovers must not take lightly or ignore such signs shown by their loved ones through any means.

She said such signs even if shown in a playful manner must also be attended to as there are some people who vent their depression and frustration in such a way to get attention. "Normally, any person who has thoughts of committing suicide would show signs of depression and stress caused by problems that are seriously bothering them."

"When these signs are visible, family members or loved ones must show concern and take seriously the person's intention to die or kill himself or herself," she told Daily Express, Monday.

Dr. Rosnah was asked for her thoughts in regard to a 24-year-old worker, Ferdausz Pahruddin, who carried out his threat to commit suicide due to a troubled relationship with his girlfriend, whom he had known for two months via the Internet.

His body was found on the car park of a condominium along Jalan Sulaman at 4pm. It was believed that he had jumped from the 9th floor.

"In the recent suicide case, the deceased used SMSes to show his intention and indication of wanting to die when unable to meet his girlfriend."

"The sister and girlfriend should have been aware of the behavioral change shown in the deceased's SMSes to them. Such content in the SMSes of threatening to kill himself should not have been ignored," Dr. Rosnah said.

She said under such circumstances people should show concern that they care for the well-being of the person who threatens to commit suicide. By doing so, she said, they could stop the person from carrying out the threat.

Dr. Rosnah said those who had such intention should be referred to social workers, psychologists, therapists or counsellors.

Social worker-cum-activist Anne Keyworth also cautioned family members and friends not to take death threats lightly.

"It's all about being more caring. Family members and friends should reach out to these people. In the case of Ferdausz, the 26-year old should have called and comforted him," she said. Keyworth said suicides are usually due to depression, obsession or rejection.

"Apart from that, few common causes of suicides are monetary failure, inter-personal relationship failure and high expectations."

"All suicide patients are depressed. Depression is often missed unlike schizophrenia. Schizophrenic patients can be violent, talk nonsense, hence, easily noticeable.

"On the other hand, depressed patients often lock themselves inside their rooms. I advise all of us to do our duty as loving and caring members of society to look out for these things." There are too many causes of suicide. Even criticism can cause a person to kill himself. Not only that, simple things like wanting a better laptop can also cause it.

"When a family member or friend is in this type of situation, someone needs to take them to a counsellor or psychiatrist. They can also call me or other Non Governmental Organisations such as Befrienders, she added."

She felt society is less educated about this so they tend to take threats very lightly. "More materials and information should be given to the public," said Keyworth.

The last two SMS messages of the deceased to his girlfriend.

The first reads: "Love, if you don't come (out of your room) I will fall from here."

The one at right reads: "I am going to die today, treat this as my last message."