

# Petronas, UMS to churn out quality graduates

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Sabah, one of the dominant contributors of oil and gas with a huge amount of oil and gas reserves, has great potential in becoming a major economic force within the country.

Dean of Engineering and Information Technology of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Assoc Prof Dr Rosalam Sarbatly, said the development in oil and gas industries of Sabah is progressing slowly however, simply because of limited expertise and trained manpower.

Therefore, Rosalam said there is every reason to forge ties between Petronas and UMS to complement each one's strengths.

He said Petronas' expertise and practical capabilities and UMS' strong academic programme will be of great significant contribution for the growth of a high value chain oil and gas industry.

"The UMS can produce the well equipped and much needed trained human capital for the wide range of Petronas activities such as exploration, production and downstream operations. Petronas can provide space for students to learn about the real challenges of the industry.

"In addition, industrial expertise and practical capabilities of the staff in Petronas are also needed to help strengthen the programme through giving industrial lectures and staff exchanges," he said.

"Sabah contributes more than a quarter of the nation's

crude oil and gas providing the state with the energy it needs, and this is where Petronas can play a role by extending their support in capitalising the newly found wealth for imparting training to the engineering graduates, technocrats in the field of oil and gas wealth.

"No doubt that Petronas has supported students from Sabah in particular to study local and abroad as their corporate social responsibility (CSR) but the human resource development in the area of oil and gas should be viewed beyond the CSR," he said.

In 2010, Sabah contributed to 26.9 per cent of the country's crude oil production.

Rosalam said having identified the potentials of oil and gas sector in the region, UMS felt that there was an urgent need to address the issue of human resources, low and high level, for the oil and gas upstream and downstream operations.

Since UMS has the capacity to train human capital, through its School of Engineering and IT (SKTM), accordingly, Master of Oil and Gas Engineering has been established, he said.

UMS will be the first in Malaysia to offer a Masters in Engineering in Oil and Gas under an 18-month programme, due to begin in September this year. This also places UMS as the fourth institute to offer such a programme after the United States, Brazil and Scotland.

Rosalam said the program has been initiated to generate pool of quality graduates to cater to the needs of ever demanding oil and gas sector.

Meanwhile, Petronas is building the Kimanis Training Centre which is expected to be ready by 2013. While the construction is going on, Petronas has already started with the training of its first batch of 25 students in Membakut since July.

Earlier this year, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman had commended Petronas for building the training centre, which he said was a dream for Sabahans especially those in Kimanis. The centre will provide them with the opportunity to study in the field without having to leave the state.

Musa also said Sabah was lucky as Petronas was there to ensure that the valuable natural resources are administered in a responsible way by all Malaysians including Sabahans.

Petronas training programmes conducted through Instep will also guide the young towards fulfilling the industry's human resource needs.

Since the programmes were introduced in 1988, more than 7,000 students have graduated including almost 700 from Sabah.

A majority of them are currently employed by Petronas as well as other oil and gas companies. — Bernama