Strive for higher education, Fatimah tells Poly graduates

BY NG KIANG CHEW

KUCHING: Whenever possible, go for higher studies to gain better knowledge and skills, Minister in the Chief Minister’s Department Datin Hajah Fatimah Abdullah told the graduates Kuching Polytechnic.

“Don’t stop at where you are learning now. This is because knowledge and skills are dynamic. They will always be progress and change,” Fatimah told the audience at the 18th Convocation of the Sarawak Kuching Polytechnic (SKP) at the Unity Stadium in Petra Jaya here yesterday.

Effort to transform the polytechnics in the nation had already taken place, she said. “The Higher Education Ministry has targeted the setting up of a polytechnic university near 2017. In February this year, Politeknik Sultan Salehuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, Shah Alam, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Ipoh and Politeknik Johor Bahru had been upgraded to premier polytechnics. The Polytechnic Education Department had Memorandum of Understanding with Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Universiti Malaysia Pahang and Universiti Malaysia Perlis. These four universities had agreed to offer 20% of their student intake for qualified polytechnic graduates.

The development is in line with the national educational transformation to produce outstanding human capital. I suggest you (SKP graduates) seize the opportunities to go for higher study,” said Fatimah.

Polytechnic, like any other educational institutions, played an important role in the development of good human resources for the nation. SKP’s various certificate and diploma programs were relevant to the country and the state’s need, she added.

“The mega development project SCORE (Sarawak Corridor Of Renewable Energy) in the central region of Sarawak, for example, will create 69,000 management and professional vacancies, 337,000 semi-skilled job vacancies and 143,000 engineer and technician vacancies. Specifically, in the aluminium industry, there will be 10,000 job vacancies, steel (7,200), glass (2,100), petroleum (6,200), oil palm (70,000), fishery and agriculture (44,000), rearing (15,000), timber (11,000), tourism (75,000). So please strive to equip yourselves fully with knowledge and skills to grab these opportunities in the future,” she advised the graduates.

The minister pointed out the recent government’s decision to change the Perbadanan Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional loan to scholarship for students who achieved first class degree should encourage more students to strive harder in their studies.

SKP Director Hajij Abdul Rahman bin Khalid also spoke at the function. A total of 1,381 year 2009 graduates of the polytechnic received their certificates and diplomas in various programmes. Also present was Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister’s Department, Larry Sng.