General

Engage with people with disabilities for well-being and happiness - Professor Dr. Ruzita

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KUANTAN, 24 March 2021 - Who would have thought that being born in perfect condition, a person can be called a people with disabilities (OKU) when misfortune strikes.

That was the story shared by the Director of Disability Services Unit, International Islamic University (IIUM), Professor Dr. Ruzita Mohd. Amin.

She came to terms with God's destiny when she had a fever and contracted polio which paralysed her since childhood.

She said the experience as a disabled person inspired her to help these people who are often marginalised and face barriers of attitude, physical, communication and system in an organisation.

"For that, we need to ensure that these people can be treated well for the sake of well-being and happiness.

"There are several OKU categories, namely hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical impairment, learning disability, speech impairment, mental impairment, and multiple disabilities.

"The implementation of the OKU Inclusion Policy outlined by the Ministry of Education Malaysia aims to create OKU-friendly infrastructure, caring community culture and conducive learning and living," she said during the 13th Bicara Cendekiawan Mulia organised by the Centre for Human Sciences (PSK) at the Banquet Hall, Chancellery, UMP Gambang Campus recently.

She added that institutions of higher learning (IPT) need to provide appropriate access to the affairs of students with disabilities.

"Besides that, IPTs need to strengthen the quality of life of students so that they are not marginalised and create an environment with user-friendly facilities and services for students with disabilities.

"This includes the establishment of self-development programmes for students with disabilities towards a more secure future career path," she said.

As a sign of support in providing services to the OKU, UMP has established the UMP OKU Services Unit (OkUMP) to create an inclusive and conducive campus.

According to the UMP Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ir. Dr. Wan Azhar Wan Yusoff, the university also has experience in accepting students with disabilities and it has assessed several issues related to the needs of this group.

"In fact, a total of RM50,000 has been provided for the benefits of this group in carrying out activities through the OKU Fund under Yayasan UMP.

"One of the well-being agendas for campus residents in the UMP Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which focuses on the health and safety of campus residents, is to focus on the OKU at this university," he said.

In line with UMP's tagline 'Technology for Society', UMP will also look at OKU issues among the local community.

In fact, in strengthening the volunteerism agenda, UMP residents are also invited to become members of the OKU association to support this effort.

The program was attended by a National Education Advisory Council member, Major General (B) Dato' Yusri Anwar.

Also present were UMP staff and UMP OKU students.

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