

'Public varsities becoming less dependent on govt'

BUDGET CUTS:

Many are carrying out income-generating activities, says Idris

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Higher Education Minister **Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh** in TV3's 'Soal Jawab' programme yesterday. Pic by Saddam Yusoff

PUBLIC universities will be able to make up for the deficit in allocations expected next year, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh said here yesterday.

Idris said the universities could boost their revenue by doing income-generating activities such as seminars, conferences, research courses, hold wakaf collections as well as collect rentals for halls or facilities.

"Many public universities are moving towards becoming less de-

pendent on the government," Idris said, adding that a target for the institutions to generate 30 per cent income by 2025 had been set under the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education).

He said this during TV3's *Soal Jawab* television programme, which focuses on the budget for

public higher learning institutions.

Allocation for public universities in the 2017 Budget for the Higher Education Ministry was cut by 5.12 per cent from RM8.2 billion this year to RM7.8 billion.

"The current model of high government dependency for public

universities is not sustainable."

However, he said there were universities that were moving towards generating higher income.

Research universities such as Universiti Putra Malaysia had generated 22 per cent of its own income, while Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia generated 21 and 18 per cent of their own income respectively. Non-research universities that are more than 10 years old, such as Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia had managed to generate 29 and 26 per cent of their own income respectively.

"These universities prove that other universities too can also generate their own income and reduce government dependency. It can be done, and it has been done. Universities in other countries are aided by their government with as little as 40 to 50 per cent (budget allocation).

"If they could generate a majority of their own income themselves, why can't we?"