

Media item

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Science Ministry to focus on 3 agendas

Daily Express (KK), Malaysia by Ricardo Unto

10 Dec 2021

Nation - Page 0 - 726 words - ID my0046330058 - Photo: No - Type: -

Size: 375.00cm²

Science Ministry to focus on 3 agendas Ricardo Unto THE State Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (KSTI) will focus on three agendas next year. They are inculcation of science, technology and innovation culture, human capital development and Internet connectivity. KSTI received an allocation of RM206.01 million for supply and RM10.6 million for development under the State Budget 2022, said Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Yakub Khan (pic). "My ministry has set up the Sabah Technology and Innovation Development Council," he said in his winding-up speech at the State Legislative Assembly. "The Council advises the ministry on issues related to science, technology and innovation, as well as drafts the ministry's policy and strategy." The ministry is in the midst of drafting the Sabah Science Policy 2022-2025, with the cooperation of the federal Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (Mosti) and Malaysian Science Academy early next year. "KSTI, he said, is also active in organising various STI/STEIN cultural programmes in collaboration with various state and federal agencies." This is also one of the efforts to ensure that the ratio of science students is at the level of 40 per cent compared to 25 per cent of students majoring in literature. "To date, only 25 per cent of students are majoring in science in Sabah because there are still many who think that 'science is a difficult knowledge or field'," he said. Among the programmes that have been implemented were the Sabah Science Carnival (KSS) 2021, Sabah International Virtual Innovation and Invention Competition (Siviic), PitchBorneo 2021 (PB2021), RoboNeo Online 2021 and Sabah Government Web Competition. Yakub said the development allocation under the 12MP2022 of RM1.5 million for Science Infrastructure Development will be utilised. "With this allocation, the ministry will develop a Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Centre at the Sabah State Library Building in phases, starting at the Keningau Itiam Library." The STI Centre with a basic science concept is a platform for students to learn STI knowledge in a fun atmosphere," he said. The ministry, he said, has also allocated RM200,000 a year for minor maintenance projects for school science laboratories, in addition to providing loans for science laboratory equipment and to establish Men of Science and Innovation Corners for selected schools. "The Ministry is also working with Mosti to further elevate the field of STI in Sabah. Mosti will develop the National Science Centre in Sabah. In the next year, "Aside from that, through the Ielronas CSR Education and Human Capital Development Sub Committee, the ministry and Ielronas have held a Design Thinking Lab: Project Kafflesia on the proposed construction of an STI Centre at the Sandakan and Tawau Branch. "God willing, the aspiration to establish STI Centres in each zone can be realised more easily and quickly with the cooperation of various agencies." On human capital, Yakub said the RM55 million allocation for scholarships shows the Government's commitment to develop human capital in line with the Sabah Maju Jaya Plan. "Human capital is the biggest asset in ensuring that whatever the Government's efforts in developing the state can be achieved." Priority will be given to science and technology as well as skills courses and TVET (technical and vocational education and training). "This year, the Ministry has offered scholarships to 1,792 people from diploma to PhD level. "And the total number of sponsored students is 5,223 including 30 students abroad," he said. The ministry, he said, is also planning to set up a technical university with Mara to create a talent pool to support the State's development in line with future needs. On digital connectivity, Yakub said, as of the third quarter of this year, the 4G coverage status throughout the State, including the rural areas has reached 83.9 percent. "The percentage of 4G coverage is expected to increase to 90 per cent when the implementation of the National Digital Network Plan (Jendela) is completed by the end of 2022." To

ensure that the people in the rural areas are not left behind in receiving broadband access, The ministry is also planning to install satellite technology in ternet (VSAT) facilities at 300 locations next year in addition lo 55 locations this year."To date, the ministry has completed the installation of VSAT services al 24 locations. t "MCMC has allocated a total of 138 locations for VSAT installation and as of Dec t, a total of 36 locations have been completed. "This initiative is in full swing and is expeeled to be completed early next year," lie said. Ricardo Unto

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