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YAYASAN SABAH GROUP IFTAR (BREAKING OF FAST) EVENT WITH CHIEF MINISTER OF SABAH

Kuala Lumpur (Wednesday): Education programmes are the backbone of Yayasan Sabah Group in realising its mission to uplift the quality of life of Malaysians in Sabah, said the Director of Yayasan Sabah, Datuk Sapawi Bin Haji Ahmad. He said this in his speech during the Chief Minister of Sabah Breaking of Fast ceremony with students from Sabah studying in Institutions of Higher Learning in Peninsular Malaysia held on 20 June 2017 at Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), Kuala Lumpur. The students get the honour of breaking fast and performing *maghrib*, *isya'* and *terawih* prayers with the Chief Minister of Sabah cum Chairman of the Yayasan Sabah Board of Trustees, Datuk Seri Panglima Musa Haji Aman.

“To achieve this mission, Yayasan Sabah Group organises educational programmes and also broaden its education provisions such as youth development programmes in its efforts to add on and complement the State Government’s activities to improve the quality of education and also educational facilities for Malaysians in Sabah,” said Datuk Sapawi.

Datuk Sapawi elaborated too that this Iftar event was one of Yayasan Sabah Group’s efforts to enhance inter-racial and religious understanding as students from different cultural and religious backgrounds were invited to an interfaith event like this during the month of Ramadan.

According to him, in order to strengthen the development of education in the country, since 1966, Yayasan Sabah Group never stop giving aid through scholarships, bursaries/sponsorships and loans. A total of **RM 622.8 million** was spent on more than **97,000 students** from Sabah who follow various disciplines whether in higher education institutions within and outside the country.

Since Yayasan Sabah Group was established over 50 years ago, the main focus is to develop human capital. Since 1966 up to now, a total of **18,236 Sabahan students** benefitted from scholarships sponsored by Yayasan Sabah Group in various fields of study. A total of **RM304.7 million** has been spent to sponsor these students who further their studies in Diploma, Bachelor's Degree, Masters and PhD levels. This amount also include a total of **RM78.3 million** spent on **488 students** who have benefitted from the *Anugerah Biasiswa Cemerlang Negeri Sabah* (ABCNS) or State Scholarship Award Distinction. Since 1990, Yayasan Sabah Group with the State Government awarded ABCNS to students who scored excellent results in their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM).

In addition to this, Yayasan Sabah Group has provided education loans to **9,596 students** by allocating funds amounting to **RM209.9 million** since 1967.

He remarked too that, "A total of **69,567 secondary students** have received scholarship/bursary sponsorship with an expense amounting to **RM108.2 million.**"

"We believe that investment in education by providing educational funds for the students' academic pursuits, will bring a hefty return in future. These students and the younger generation at large are leaders in the making. They are the generation that will lead the nation into greater heights 20, 30 years from now," said Datuk Sapawi again.

Speaking to more than 1,000 students at PWTC, Datuk Sapawi urged for them to cherish and fully benefit from the opportunities that were given to them. "At the university, focus should not only be on studies but also extra-curricular activities and sports. With a balance of the two, students are shaped to be more active and holistic, criteria that companies look for in their candidates," he said.

This marks the 12th year that the breaking of fast ceremony is being organised. It is a platform for students from Sabah who are studying in institutions of higher learning in Peninsular Malaysia, to spend time with Datuk Seri Panglima Musa Haji Aman and at the same time providing them the opportunity to exchange experiences and stories with other students.

Datuk Sapawi also expressed his hopes for the students, “We hope that the students will work hard and study smart to become the best of the best graduates not only for their own self-achievement but most importantly, as a sign of gratitude to their parents and families at home as well as becoming the future leaders of our beloved Sabah.”

Also in attendance were Federal and State Cabinet Ministers and other invitees.

- PIX 1** : Datuk Seri Musa and Datuk Sapawi with the students.
- PIX 2** : Datuk Seri Musa presenting *duit raya* to student representative, Cik Hana Dayana Binti Hussin from Nilai University.
- PIX 3** : Datuk Seri Musa taking a group photo with the students.
- PIX 4** : Students taking selfie with Datuk Seri Musa.
- PIX 5** : Datuk Seri Musa sharing his advice to the students.

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