

# Relying on grads to promote Kustem

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- Sunday, 17 Aug 2003

12:00 AM MYT

**BY K. SUTHAKAR**

A SERIOUS responsibility awaits the pioneer batch of Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia (Kustem) graduates who receive their scrolls in their convocation ceremony in Kuala Terengganu today.

College rector Prof Datuk Dr Mohamed Mahyuddin Mohd Dahan said the graduates have to prove to the outside world the quality of education provided by Kustem.

“If they fail to perform well, then it would be a difficult task for us to publicise our existence since we are still new,” he said in an interview.

A total of 770 graduands will receive their scrolls from the Sultan of Terengganu Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin who is also the college’s Chancellor at the Terengganu Trade Centre. The graduands include 762 first-degree holders, seven Masters in Science and a single doctorate recipient – Mohd Zambri Jaafar, 43, of Pasir Mas – in the field of education administration.

The recipient of the Chancellor’s Gold Award is Mohammad Faisal Md Saleh, 22, who pursued a science degree in the conservation and management of biodiversity.

The Royal Award winners are Rosmawati Ahmad, 25, of Machang, Kelantan, in the bumiputra category and Gan Ming Heng, 23, of Pulau Pangkor in the non-bumiputra category.

The recipient of the university’s board of directors chairman award is Zailani Abdullah, 33, of Pasir Mas, Kelantan.

Today’s convocation will also be the first one ever held for a public institution of higher learning in the East Coast.

The college which is located in Mengabang Telipot, about 22km from Kuala Terengganu, offers 18 programmes under its three faculties: Science and Technology; Agro-technology and Food Science; and Management and Economics. Also known as University College of Science and Technology, it is one of six such university colleges in the country and among the 17 public universities in the country.

Dr Mohamed Mahyuddin said Kustem was a “focus university” concentrating on the management of science and technology in natural resources. It has an enrolment of 3,800 students of which about 68% are bumiputra, with 270 lecturers.

In 1979, the then Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (UPM) set up the Marine Science and Fishery Centre. In June 1996, it became the Terengganu branch of UPM or UMPT.

In May 1999, the Cabinet approved the setting up of the Kolej Universiti Terengganu (KUT) based on Marine Science and Fishery Centre, UPMT. KUT began operating as a public university on Jan 1, 2000 and on June 20 the following year, its the name was changed to Kustem.

Dr Mohamed Mahyuddin said only about 40% of the campus area encompassing 65 hectares is being utilised now.

On campus facilities, he said the RM25mil state-of-the-art library building which incorporates digital technology facilities would be completed in April next year.

A multipurpose hall with a seating capacity of 4,000 would be ready by end of the year.

“Once completed, it would probably be the biggest hall in the East Coast,” he said, adding that the project cost RM23mil.

He said a new administration building costing RM12mil was expected to be ready by the middle of next year.

Three other projects costing RM126mil have been put on hold pending approval for funding. They are the construction of a new building for the Management and Economics Faculty, a students’ centre and sports complex.

Dr Mohamad Mahyuddin said Kustem, which is located along the coast, was promoting water activities such as kayaking, scuba-diving and sailing among its students.

“We want our students to do the college and country proud by becoming champions in these fields,” he added.