

Workshop to determine research clusters

KUCHING: A workshop will be organised by Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Research next month with all the stakeholders and research institutions to determine research clusters relevant to Sarawak's needs.

This is done in line with the setting up of the Sarawak Research and Development Council, which has been approved by the State Legislative Assembly.

Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Dato Sri Michael Manyin Jawong said one of the main objectives of setting up the council is to coordinate and facilitate the effort of various agencies and institutions undertaking research in Sarawak and not to conduct any research of its own.

"Hence, there is no issue of duplication and redundancy. In fact, the Sarawak Research and Development Council will remove duplication and streamline our effort to optimise our resources.

"Sarawak Research and Development Council will



also help to commercialise the outcomes of the R&D done in the state," he said.

Manyin stressed that he was not disputing the findings of a study quoted by Chong Chieng Jen (DAP-Kota Sentosa) that there is no link between investment in R&D and the development of a developing country, as it is understandable that the developing countries will not be able to allocate significant amount of funds toward R&D.

But for Sarawak, he said its R&D will focus on utilising the state's rich biodiversity and natural resources to bring value and benefit to Sarawak.

He pointed out that both developed and developing



Manyin (middle) in jovial mood before presenting his winding-up speech, as he goes through the text with Assistant Minister of Education and Technological Research Dr Annuar Rapae (left) and the ministry's permanent secretary Datu Sudarsono Osman.

countries are investing in R&D.

"Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan did not wait until they become developed countries before investing in R&D. Instead, their investment in R&D has been an important factor that

has propelled them to become developed countries," he said.

On another matter, he said more jobs will eventually be created under Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE) where a study by Universiti

Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) had stated 1.3 million new jobs will be created by 2030.

As at September 30, he said 10 companies were already operating within SCORE.

"In total, these companies have

generated 6,285 jobs, of which 3,414 (54 per cent) are filled by locals.

"In addition, four companies with potential to generate 3,475 jobs are in various stages of construction.

"Further investments from eight other companies have been approved and this is expected to generate 3,866 jobs," he added, stating the figures mentioned did not include the substantial number of jobs generated by other trigger industries in SCORE such as tourism, timber, plantation and marine as well as the supporting and enabling industries such as construction, logistics and maintenance.

"We are now at the beginning of phase 2 of SCORE which places greater focus on the development of small and medium industries (SMEs) that will be the main creator of new jobs.

"In the long term, the number of jobs generated directly or indirectly as a result of SCORE will be substantial and will have significant impact on the economy of Sarawak," he said.