Len: Limit number of foreign students

KUCHING: Assistant Minister in the Chief Minister’s Office (Promotion of Technical Education) Datu Len Talif Salleh agrees that the state government should set a limit to the number of foreign students studying in higher learning institutions in the state.

For a start, he suggested that ideally, their numbers should be around 10 per cent of the total student enrolment at public or private institutions of higher learning.

“It’s good that we have foreign students coming in from all over the world as they need to be given an opportunity as well so that our students will have some exposure such as understanding of foreign culture, their language and so on,” said Len.

“However, I also agree that maybe we can set a limit on the number of international students that should be allowed in any higher learning institution in Sarawak,” he added.

Len was commenting on the influx of foreign students at private higher learning institutions in Sarawak when met after launching the Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) 2012 Education Carnival here yesterday.

Meanwhile, Len also expressed his satisfaction at the number of technical and vocational courses offered by higher learning institutions in the state.

“In Sarawak itself, we have around 83 public or private institutions of higher learning so there is no lack of placements for students,” he said, adding that students also had the option to study in Peninsular Malaysia or overseas. According to him, the state government would be introducing a new ‘industry’ to train students after completing their higher education studies.

“This means that students who have completed their studies, be it in diploma or degree level, will have to be re-trained in the specific industry they are working for,” he said.

Citing Tokoyama as an example, Len said with the Japanese company’s branch in Samalaju, Bintulu commencing operation towards the end of this year, some students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) would be chosen and sent to Japan for some industrial training.