

LEARNING CURVE HIGHER EDUCATION

Alternative view on education

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MANY today regard universities as institutions that churn out professionals for jobs as specified by market demand.

However, a graduate should not only be scientifically knowledgeable and technically competent, but also socially sensitive, ethically responsible, professionally accountable, be an effective team member and a lifelong learner who upholds principles. Such inherent values could help eradicate greed and corruption, leading to a better future for humankind.

This was the crux of the discussion at a recent three-day workshop — *Islamic Perspective on Higher Education* — in Nilai. Attendees included those from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) as well as two Islamic tertiary institutions in Nigeria, namely Al-Qalam University and Ilorin University.

It was proposed that work towards building a network of Is-



Musa Ahmad

lamic universities in Malaysia and the African continent be kicked off based on the application of values in Naqli (revealed knowledge) and Aqli ((rational knowledge) — an approach taken by USIM in researching into Islamic Science.

USIM vice chancellor Professor Datuk Musa Ahmad said that in order to build on the agenda, Muslim intellectuals should work collectively to produce research that can benefit the *ummah*.

"Among the activities that we



Abdulganiyu Ambali

have identified are the creation of experts and research database/directory to enhance Malaysian-Nigerian (and African countries) collaboration, exchange of scholars between these countries and joint research collaborations," he said.

"We need to revive and enlighten the tradition and intellectual success of our past knowledge and sciences, and build on them to make Islamic knowledge and sciences relevant to every part of the world," he added, highlighting that



Shehu G. Ado

this will involve adapting Western knowledge and sciences to the Islamic framework in the context of Naqli-Aqli integration.

Ilorin University vice chancellor Professor Abdulganiyu Ambali noted that the joint initiative should not be confused with being evangelical in purpose but rather as a means to provide another perspective on higher education.

"It is important to have a comprehensive understanding of the world. Knowledge is supposed to

be holistic.

"The Islamic perspective gives options to the world... not to replace but to enrich. We live in a global world where what affects one country will also affect others. Universities are responsible for improving society.

"We want to make use of the university for the integration and transferring of knowledge," he said.

Al-Qalam University vice chancellor Professor Shehu G. Ado said academic leaders need to emphasise the essence of education.

"The world is not static. We have had problems stemming from greed and materialism which can only be corrected when the mindset is changed.

"This is where the integration of sciences and revealed knowledge gives an alternative to what is available," he said.

Possible collaboration and joint research areas between the tertiary institutions include specimen preservation and dentistry and brain capacity with regards to the ability to memorise the Al-Quran from a scientific perspective.