

# Manyin: Research, Development Council to oversee R&D in S'wak

THE soon-to-be-formed Sarawak Research and Development Council will be a statutory body to oversee the promotion, coordination and advancement of research and development (R&D) in Sarawak.

Education, Science and Technological Research Minister Dato Sri Michael Manyin Jawong said the council, which will be headed by Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg, has several functions and duties including to create, develop, apply for and hold intellectual property (IP) rights arising from R&D under the Sarawak Research and Development Council Bill, 2017 Ordinance and to enter into arrangements with any person, organisation or institution for the commercial application of such (IP) rights.

"With the establishment of the council, there is collaboration and coordination with research bodies in the state and we will be able to commercialise their findings," he said when tabling the Sarawak Research and Development Council Bill, 2017 which was passed at the State Legislative Assembly (DUN) here yesterday.

Manyin pointed out that at the moment, research bodies such as Craun Research Sdn Bhd, Sarawak Tropical Peat Research Institute, Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), Sarawak Biodiversity Centre (SBC), and Sarawak Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority (Salcra) were carrying out researches in silo.

"If we do not know what they are doing then we won't be able to know how to commercialise their findings.

"So with the establishment of the council, there is collaboration and coordination and whatever they do, we will be able to commercialise the research findings," he explained and advised Chong

Chieng Jen (DAP-Kota Sentosa) not to jump the gun by assuming that the Bill was a useless one in his debate earlier.

He took a swipe at the state DAP chairman for having the tendency to play to the gallery in the august House and for trying to establish himself as a political corrector.

"He (Chong) always assumes that we (state government) are stupid and we don't know anything. So can we describe him as an omniscient of this House," quipped Manyin.

He said Chong in his debate had also tried to be an economist by noting that developing countries should not carry out research as it was only meant for developed countries.

"It's true that developing countries have not done much research because as he said, money is scarce; the means are limited and the ends are unlimited. That is why developing countries don't have the means to conduct research because we want to utilise the money as the ends are limited."

However, Manyin emphasised that if the state does not carry out any research, it would never be able to get services of qualified and experienced Sarawakians working overseas because they cannot work here.

"Once this (Sarawak Research and Development Council) is done, I think in the next two to three years or 10 years, we will be able to get qualified people like Prof (Dr David) Huang (a Sarawak-born doctor who developed a revolutionary drug for cancer treatment with his Melbourne medical researchers) to work in Sarawak and we will be able to pay their salaries.

"That is the purpose of the Bill so we don't want to lose the brains of Sarawak and the potential we have," he said.