



**Official line-up:** Idris (seventh from left) posing for a group photo with vice-chancellors from the eight universities. With them are, fifth from left onwards: Higher Education Ministry director-general Datin Dr Siti Hamisah Tapsir and secretary-general Tap Sri Dr Noorul Ainur Mohd Nur, MQA chairman Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Abu Hassan Othman and chief executive officer Prof Datuk Dr Rujhan Mustafa (fifth from right).

## Eight more learning institutions awarded self-accreditation status

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**PUTRAJAYA:** Another eight higher learning institutions have been awarded self-accreditation status.

Universiti Teknologi Mara, Universiti Teknologi Petronas, International Medical University, Universiti Utara Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Universiti Tenaga Nasional and Multimedia University joined nine that were awarded earlier.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh said self-accreditation status entitled the respective university's senate to accredit its programmes based on the standards set by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA).

"This autonomy is granted to universities that have obtained the level of quality that can be certified by the MQA," he said after handing the certificates to the universities yesterday.

It was reported that MQA chief executive officer Prof Datuk Dr Rujhan Mustafa said self-accreditation was awarded by MQA to universities with a solid and stable internal quality assurance system.

Prof Rujhan said the award was based on performance, which would hopefully inject competitiveness among the universities, in continuing to strive for quality.

On a separate matter, Idris said Malaysia should seize the opportunity to attract more international students to study here given the drop in applications to study in the US.

"This is a good opportunity to become an education hub in the region," he added.

Idris said Kuala Lumpur was ranked "the world's most affordable student city" in the annual QS Best Student Cities 2017.

QS Intelligence Unit head of research Ben Sowter said the rankings recognised the importance of affordability for most prospective students and their families.