

## Employers can help solve the issue of unemployed graduates

PETALING JAYA: Employers are supportive of the government's call for economic reforms that embraces a new development model based on knowledge intensity and productivity-driven in order for Malaysia to achieve high income status.

Acknowledging the new direction that the government has embarked on with the mobilisation of all its ministries and agencies towards this objective, MEF President Dato' Dr Syed Hussain J.P. said employers are able to contribute to this crucial effort by fulfilling an important role.

"We are positive about the government's plans and we want to help our country achieve this goal by doing our part," said the MEF President.

"An area where employers can contribute is on the issue of unemployed and underemployed graduates, which could be addressed in a targeted and structured manner.

"There are about 500,000 new graduates every year but because of the disruptions and delays caused by the Covid-19 situation that number would double to about one million in 2021.

"To add to this predicament, the majority of employers are currently on survival mode and can only be expected to fully recover in one to two years.

"As employers, we can assist the government in this area as through natural recruitment due to attrition and business plans, we should be able to absorb 30 per cent of the new graduates.

"With continuous government support – including wage subsidies, tax benefits and other incentives – employers may be able to absorb another 20 per cent and train them on industry needs such as IR 4.0 skills training and apprenticeship programmes.

"Equipped with industry-relevant skills, these graduates could also be encouraged to market themselves abroad, while another 30 per cent could be hired by new industries or investments through the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and its agencies

the Malaysian Development Investment Authority (MIDA) and the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE).

“While the remaining 20 per cent could be trained to become entrepreneurs,” he added.

Dato’ Syed Hussain also commended the Ministry of International Trade and Industry for efforts to attract the much-needed foreign direct investments (FDI) as large multinational companies would be able to offer large number of jobs to the jobseekers, and this includes the Invest KL and its talent programme.

“Though Malaysia aspires to shift to the high-tech economy, in the interim we would still want the large multinational companies to set up here so that they could be supported by the ready-trained graduates.

“MITI has done well to attract more FDI and to encourage internationalisation of Malaysia’s SMEs and entrepreneurs.”

In addition, he commended the Ministry of Human Resources, PERKESO and HRDF under the PENJANA initiative to train and upskill our workforce and to provide placement and support to the retrenched employees during these difficult times.

“We intend to work closely with the government, especially the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Human Resources.

“We believe together we can achieve whatever we set out to do because we have an excellent team in Malaysia.”

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