

Local

## Private sector crucial in creating demand-driven TVET system, says MEF president

Rajvinder Singh

28-03-2023 07:18 AM



*Syed Hussain says TVET graduates in a demand-driven TVET education system ensures they are more employable and will be able to command a better employment package. – Bernamapic*

**PETALING JAYA:** The private sector's involvement in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme is crucial in creating a demand-driven TVET system that contributes towards the achievement of national goals, said Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF).

MEF president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the national TVET policy that drives quality skills development through a combination of classroom-based training and practical experience in the workplace requires greater involvement of the private sector.

"Collaboration with the private sector helps trainees acquire skills required at the workplace and also reduce mismatch between TVET qualifications and demands of the labour market.

"Practical training offered by the private sector provides working environment experience and creates better attitude of TVET graduates towards private sector workplace requirements," he said, adding that private sector employers' involvement in TVET training is an important strategic role to improve the relevance of TVET graduates.

He said private sector participation in TVET policy and decision-making processes is critical to the development of a sustainable and demand-driven TVET.

The private sector involvement in shaping policy frameworks for TVET in skills development facilitates the integration of learning and practices in the workplace, and strengthens TVET governance through participation in national TVET committees.

Syed Hussain said the involvement ensures what is taught in TVET education is relevant to the needs of the private sector, as this will allow TVET graduates to be ready for employment without long and costly retraining at the workplace.

At the same time, it will also reduce the costs on TVET providers while increasing trainees' opportunities for skills development.

"TVET graduates in a demand-driven TVET education system ensures they are more employable and will be able to command a better employment package," said Syed Hussain.

"With a sustainable supply of skilled TVET graduates, employers will be more confident of embracing and implementing IR4.0 in their production and services processes."

He said appropriate TVET system with greater collaboration of the private sector enables TVET to produce ready-to-work graduates.

"In future-proofing skills of TVET graduates, there is a need for industry to be actively engaged in developing curriculum and in its delivery as well as its evaluation," he said, adding that TVET brings long-term benefits to the development of the country and MEF has several proposals in mind.

He said an increase in funding for TVET is needed to ensure students have access to state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, and to attract and retain highly qualified teachers, trainers and students.

"The TVET academic staff should be given more sabbatical leave to take up training at industries, to further improve their knowledge and have first-hand information on the latest developments in industries and further understand their needs.

"Only then can education be made more relevant and responsive to the needs of the labour market."

He said TVET reputation needs to be enhanced by promoting the benefits of TVET and highlighting its success stories. This will help to attract more quality students to TVET and reduce the stigma associated with vocational education.

Syed Hussain said the TVET education system is bogged down by the multiple, overlapping mandates and jurisdictions of ministries and agencies involved in its provisions.

He added this puts a lot of constraints on the smooth functioning of the system, as the accreditation of programmes is placed under two separate entities and seen as confusing by private sector employers.

"Diplomas and degrees conferred on TVET graduates should be fully recognised by the government and industries. TVET will be the most relevant education in the future.

"The future is going to be driven by technology and advanced sciences. It is going to be more robotic and digitalised. It is going to be hands-on experience with modern tools. TVET is the pathway for the future."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim recently called on large and multinational companies to help cover the funding of TVET.

He said by doing so, they would directly help the people through acquisition, maintenance and training.