

MALAYSIA

## Give incentives to employers providing TVET internships, MEF tells govt

Remove bureaucratic red tapes on tax incentives, president urges

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Malaysian Employers Federation president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman (not pictured) says that for technical and vocational education training to produce ready-to-work graduates and future-proof the skills of its graduates, there is real need for industry to be actively engaged to develop curriculum and delivery and be involved in its evaluation. – Education Ministry pic, December 26, 2022

**KUALA LUMPUR** – While employers are prepared to support internships for technical and vocational education training (TVET) students, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) is urging the government to better incentivise bosses to do so.

Its president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the existing bureaucratic red tapes on tax incentives, for instance, should be removed to encourage more participants of industry players providing training to the students.

“By doing so, more micro, small and medium enterprises will be encouraged and attracted to provide internship places to the students requiring industrial training,” he said in a statement.

He said at present, the TVET education system is bogged down by multiple, overlapping mandates and jurisdictions between ministries and agencies.

Hussain also suggested that academic staff do more sabbatical leave training in the industries to furnish them with better firsthand knowledge of the latest industrial developments and needs.

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

His comment is in response to Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin’s remark yesterday acknowledging the importance of TVET, and that polytechnics and community colleges need to be treated with the same regard as public and private universities.

Khaled had said that vocational colleges are key pillars in the development of good talents and manpower for nation-building, and that they should not be regarded as “second chance” institutions.

Hussain said while MEF concurs with Khaled on the importance of TVET as an alternative to academic education, more still needed to be done to get better buy-in from parents.

He noted that presently, skilled workers in the country still remain at a low of 29%, compared to the ideal level of above 50% achieved by the most developed nations.

“As the country is moving towards mechanisation, automation and digitalisation, the country needs a stronger technical labour to execute the growth and development plans.

“The diplomas and degrees conferred to TVET graduates should be fully recognised by the government and the industries.

“TVET has thus far been negatively perceived by the parents who, by and large, prefer academic pathways. There is an urgent need to mainstream TVET and work on its rebranding to make it the first choice of education among parents.”

Hussain added that for TVET to produce ready-to-work graduates and future-proof the skills of its graduates, there is real need for industry to be actively engaged to develop curriculum and delivery and be involved in its evaluation. – The Vibes, December 26, 2022