

MEF gives thumbs up to single TVET certification proposal

Suggested move important in addressing confusion regarding current system, says organisation's president

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MEF president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman says it is critical for the country to revamp the TVET curriculum to ensure that graduates meet market requirements and to future-proof the skills of the Malaysian workforce. – MEF pic, January 10, 2023

KUALA LUMPUR – The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) has backed the government's proposal to introduce a single certification for technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

MEF president Datuk Syed Hussain Syed Husman said the move is critical in addressing existing confusion among the public and employers regarding the current system, with certifications accredited by two regulatory agencies – Skills Development Department (JPK) and the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA).

His remarks come in light of Human Resources Minister V. Sivakumar's announcement last week that the ministry is proposing for the Malaysian Skills Certification System (SPKM) to be used for TVET.

Hussain concurred that SPKM, which is based on the National Occupational Skills Standard under the regulation of JPK, should be made the single national TVET certification for all levels of TVET programmes.

“MEF will work closely with the Human Resources Ministry (MoHR) to uplift the image of mainstream TVET. There is an urgent need to rebrand TVET and make it as the preferred choice rather than as a last choice,” he said in a statement.

According to Hussain, it is also critical for the country to revamp the TVET curriculum to ensure that graduates meet market requirements and to future-proof the skills of the Malaysian workforce.

Speaking at his ministry’s 2023 New Year assembly on Friday, Sivakumar had announced the proposal to use SPKM, which will standardise TVET certification for levels one to five in the Malaysian Qualifications Framework.

He said the Manpower Department also needs to re-evaluate the courses offered so that they meet the current needs of the industry to ensure there is no mismatch.

A day earlier, Sivakumar had said in a statement that the cabinet meeting on December 7 had decided to transfer the function of the secretariat of the National TVET Council to his ministry. It was previously placed under the Higher Education Ministry.

Commenting on this, Hussain said the decision is in line with the government’s aspiration to make TVET a driver of national progress, while maintaining that MoHR is the appropriate party to be put in charge.

This, he said, is because the ministry already possesses the necessary ecosystem, including overseeing the TVET regulatory agencies, and training providers and funds.

“The cooperation of all TVET stakeholders including the private sector employers is well established under the MoHR which practises the principles of tripartism.

“MoHR is more directly involved with employers and industries. It is the lead ministry to handle all matters related to administration of human resources from housing, safety and health, training, certification and other related matters.

“MoHR also has a direct interest in ensuring that industries have all the support to succeed. It is the custodian of human resources matters and therefore the right ministry to manage TVET to meet the requirements of the labour market.” – The Vibes, January 10, 2022