

MTUN tasked with finding ways to boost TVET; will be 13th Malaysia Plan priority



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Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin said the universities concerned — Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Tun Hussein Onn University (UTHM), Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) — will have to play a pivotal role in the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP). - NSTP/FARIZUL HAFIZ AWANG

PEKAN: Universities under the Malaysian Technical University Network (MTUN) have been instructed to look into measures to boost student enrolment and programmes to meet the country's growing demands for technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin said the universities concerned — Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Tun Hussein Onn University (UTHM), Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) — will have to play a pivotal role in the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP).

"The four universities have been told to look into ways for expansion in order to meet the TVET demands in the 13MP. This includes increasing student enrolment, exploring new fields including high-end and advanced TVET, and hiring more manpower (professors and lecturers).

"Currently, the four MTUN universities offer 12,000 places for students every year but we have between 200,000 and 300,000 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia school-leavers and those from matriculation courses annually. It is the responsibility of the MTUN to look into the shortages (student intake).

"In the 13MP, the ministry hopes the MTUN universities will be able to roll out their plans to enroll more TVET students and offer more courses including expanding their campus, relocating the faculties (to strategic locations) and opening new branch campuses. The aim is to increase enrolment in TVET," he told reporters after his working visit to UMP Pekan here today.

Khaled said during his meeting with UMP's management, he had emphasised on the importance to give priority to TVET programmes which is the future of the country and ensure it becomes the main focus of the university.

Meanwhile, he said that both universities and industries have established close cooperation and complement each other.

"The industries need the universities and the same applies for universities (need industry)... if the industry does not utilise the universities they will not be able to secure skilled workers, become less innovative and cannot compete while universities need the industries to remain relevant by offering programmes that will help chart the direction of the country.

"Industrial training in the final year of a respective programme will provide undergraduates with the necessary exposure when they step up into the working environment. In UMP, the campus has developed a strategic partnership with Bosch Rexroth Sdn Bhd involving industrial training, student exchange and offering improved learning courses to strengthen university-industry collaboration," he said.

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