

Local technical field expanding in line with IR 4.0 - PM

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The technical field remains relevant and continues to expand in the country in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob. - Bernama pic

KUALA LUMPUR: The technical field remains relevant and continues to expand in the country in line with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0), said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

He said for this purpose, the government had allocated RM6.6 billion under the 2022 Budget to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

"This field is frequently misinterpreted as the second choice which is only suitable for individuals with academic achievements that are not excellent. Actually, this stigma is obsolete because graduates of technical education and training programmes and TVET are getting increasing attention from employers," he said when launching the 2021 National Technical Profession Day (HPTN) celebration which was held virtually today.

Ismail Sabri said the country now has many world-class technology-based companies and a majority of them were pioneered by technical professionals.

As such, the prime minister said, job opportunities in fields related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic (STEM) and TVET are very bright and should not be missed by Keluarga Malaysia (Malaysian Family) especially youth.

He said these job opportunities were the result of careful planning done by the government since 2013, beginning with the introduction of the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy which encourages the use of advanced technology to produce expert and skilled technical professionals.

He said that as at this year Malaysia has had 203,966 members registered in various fields of expertise related to the technical profession.

The government had introduced various initiatives and strategies relating to the technical field through the implementation of comprehensive and holistic policies which incorporated the views of various quarters including experts, he added.

The views and advice came from, among others, the Works Ministry; International Trade and Industry Ministry; Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry; Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU) and national technical agencies such as the Public Works Department (JKR) and Drainage and Irrigation Department (JPS).

The views of the private sector and industry practitioners were also considered in this matter, he said.

"This is to ensure that the technical field in this country remains sustainable and competitive. In line with IR 4.0, the global economy is undergoing rapid transformation through new technological achievements which transcend the physical, digital and biological realms.

"The advent of new technologies such as automation, robotics, artificial intelligence (A-I), machine-to-machine (M-2-M) and internet of things (I-o-T) has changed the way the world operates," he added.

Ismail Sabri said to ensure that the country was not left behind by the wave of change and technological explosion, the government had introduced the National Fourth Industrial Revolution Policy. This policy is an initiative which reflected the government's aspiration to transform Malaysia with inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development that is anchored on digitalisation, to turn it into the regional leader in digital economy, he said.

He said the policy also supported national development policies such as the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP), Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 (WKB 2030) and complemented the Malaysia Digital Economy Blueprint (MyDIGITAL).

"It is very clear here, the initiatives and policies that I mentioned are very significant for all levels of the country's technical profession.

"Those in the technical profession have an important role to play, to together to mobilise energy towards moving the country forward and exceed the aspirations of the people in all areas of technical development such as engineering, health, research, education, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and so on, in line with the theme of the HPTN 2021 celebration 'Moving the Nation Beyond Aspirations'," he said.

Ismail Sabri also welcomed the call by Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali who wanted to see a high-performing civil service through leaders who are experts, innovative and brave to face challenges based on the values of integrity, accountability and transparency.

He hoped that the Public Service Department (JPA) would open up more opportunities for members of the technical profession to fill strategic positions in national policymaking that are traditionally filled by the management group, towards realising this objective.

"I am confident that this can be realised as Malaysia has many talents who have been recognised on the international stage such as Fakhirah Khairuddin, a mechanical engineer at TESLA Inc, the United States, and Mohammad Ruhaidi Abdul Rashid, structural engineer, design specialist and senior technical manager at BMW Motorsport Germany," he said.

As for the public sector, the prime minister said Malaysia could also be proud of government technical agencies such as the JKR, which had contributed a lot to the country's infrastructure development by implementing more than RM500 billion worth of projects since its establishment in 1872.

The achievements included pioneering the use of Building Information Modelling (B-I-M), I-Supervision and E-Perolehan (E-Procurement) in project implementation.

"This is definitely a catalyst and enabler to the implementation of high-impact IR 4.0 technologies such as 3D Printing, I-o-T, Big Data, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality," he said.

Ismail Sabri said the latest global developments especially IR 4.0, which was centered on the latest technologies and aimed at a faster, smarter and more dynamic industrial, economic and living environment, required the country to ensure that technical workers were equipped with the latest skills by "upgrading" and "upscaling" based on technological developments and future industry needs.

Malaysia, he said, also needs to be realistic with the ability of the younger generation to be given exposure and contribute technical expertise to the international stage, thus making the country famous around the world.

"The government is determined to strengthen its commitment to make Malaysia a developing country consistent with the concept of fair, equitable and inclusive economic distribution in line with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030," he said. –BERNAMA