

4 FEB 1996

Ah Lek-Hotel

TRAINING TO MEET ANTICIPATED DEMAND FOR HOTEL WORKERS

KUANTAN, Feb 4 (Bernama) -- A major training programme will be launched in April to produce more hotel workers to meet the rapid growth in this sector, Human Resources Minister Datuk Lim Ah Lek said today.

"If immediate steps are not taken, we expect the hotel industry to face a shortage of workers when more than 20 five-star hotels under construction in the country are completed soon," he said.

The programme, which is targeted at school leavers, would be conducted with allocations from the Human Resource Development Fund, he told reporters after presenting hampers to about 300 old people here.

The fund, which stands at RM216 million, had provided training for some 600,000 workers in various sectors since its establishment in 1993, he said.

A sum of RM90 million from the fund has been allocated for training purposes this year.

The ministry has held discussions with hotel operators and has asked them to participate in the programme.

The standard of service would drop if hotels were short of workers and this would discourage tourists from coming to the country, he said.

On the government's plan to lure retirees and housewives into the labour market, Lim said the government would neither force the private sector to hire these people nor provide incentives for them to do so.

The ministry was still studying possible amendments to the law to encourage employers to recruit housewives and retirees to work part-time or full-time, he said.

In his 1996 New Year message, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the government would attract retirees and housewives into the job market to help reduce dependence on foreign workers. -- Bernama