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`Explain details of skills upgrading fund call'

THE Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC) will write a letter to the Treasury, enquiring about ways and which the proposed allocation of RM1.45 billion in Budget 1999 for skills training will be implemented.

Its president, Encik Zainal Rampak said the letter will be sent soon so that the Treasury could explain the details on the disbursement of the allocation for skills upgrading.

Responding to the Budget 1999 tabled by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Parliament on Friday, Zainal said the RM1.45 billion allocation for skill training centres is a good move, in line with the importance placed on high-technology industries.

MTUC, however, will write to the Treasury requiring details such as the disbursement system, the group that will benefit from it and the application method for the allocation.

It has been proposed that a sum of RM1.145 billion is allocated under the ministries of Education, Entrepreneur Development, Human Resources and Youth and Sports, for skills training in the 79 vocational and technical schools, 16 skills development training institutes, 135 Mara institutes and for the construction of an additional 24 new skills training centres.

Zainal said MTUC views next year's Budget as a growth-oriented and business-promoting budget as it emphasises the infrastructure development and promotion of foreign direct investment.

"The Budget is also tailored to the recommendation of the National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP) by the National Economic Action Council (NEAC)," said Zainal, who sits in the NEAC, representing the workers.

He said the NERP, which emphasises the role financial sector in extending credit to stimulate the local construction sector, is most welcomed as it would help job-creation.

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