

13/01/1998

View career options at March fair

Marina Tan

MALAYSIANS who want to explore their opportunities in higher education and training and career options should make a date with the International Education and Language 1998 Exhibition, to be held in March.

Organised by Facon Exhibition and Trade Fairs (M) Sdn Bhd for the ninth time, the exhibition showcases both local and overseas educational institutions and courses.

This year's exhibition also emphasises language learning and affordability, issues which, Facon general manager Wong Kum San said, are timely as the country deals with increasing globalisation, shortage of skilled labour and regional economic problems.

The fair is to be held in conjunction with the Careers Incorporating Training exhibition, so visitors, especially school-leavers and undergraduates, can get an idea of careers available and equip themselves with the relevant skills.

About 60 per cent of the 100 exhibition booths have been filled up. A recent Press conference illustrated the diverse nature of the exhibitors, which include the Tun Abdul Razak Institute of Technology, International Medical College, Malaysian Institute of Art, Sedaya College, French Education Centre and Sunway College.

Affordable and accessible through its six Peninsula-wide campuses, the Tun Abdul Razak Institute of Technology (ITTAR) offers courses in business administration and management, accountancy, hotel/resort management and tourism, computer and information technology, technical and vocational training and entrepreneurship.

Apart from internal programmes ranging from certificate to advanced diploma courses, ITTAR has joint programmes with Universiti Sains Malaysia and the Swansea Institute of Higher Education. Total tuition fees range from RM1,875 to RM10,965.

Already, 6,000 students have graduated since the institute was launched in 1992 by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Meanwhile, those interested in pursuing medical or pharmacy degree programmes can learn more about the International Medical College, established in 1992.

According to IMC dean Prof David Riches, students spend the first two-and-a-half years at IMC before going overseas to one of its 20 partner medical schools in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Students in this year's March intake will be going overseas in the year 2000 or 2001, Riches said, adding that after completing their two- to three-and-a-half-year programme there, they will return to Malaysia to do a one-year housemanship.

The 31-year-old Malaysian Institute of Art, on the other hand, is aggressively gearing itself to help fulfil the country's demand for qualified artists, designers, musicians and performing artists.

This is through short-term and full-time certificate programmes, as well as overseas links with over 25 different institutions.

"Aside from our two main schools of Arts and Design and Performing Arts, we also have an extra-mural studies programme for the general public which has drawn students ranging from four years of age to 72," said MICA marketing and promotion director Jeffrey Lim.

The non-profit institute also re-channels its profits back to society,

Lim said, through 10 different scholarships and various forms of financial aid for deserving students. Its National Art Competition Scholarship, for example, pays for the student's entire three-year programme.

For those wanting an edge through international exposure, the French Education Centre offers access to more than 2,000 undergraduate and post-graduate courses in 90 public universities, 250 polytechnics and over 200 business and engineering schools in France.

The centre is the representative office in Malaysia of the Societe Francaise d'Exportation de Ressources Educatives (SFERE), an agency directly sponsored and backed by the French Government.

As SFERE director for Malaysia Serge Rabier put it, "Speaking English is no longer extraordinary and the only way for high flyers to distinguish themselves is to be knowledgeable in other languages, other cultures."

The education and training exhibitions will be held at Kuala Lumpur's Putra World Trade Centre from March 13 to 15, Ipoh's Syuen Hotel on March 17, Penang's Berjaya Georgetown Hotel on March 19 and Johor Baru's Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza on March 21.

They are supported by the Education Ministry, the Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and the New Straits Times. Those interested can contact Facon at 03-788766, fax 03-788771 or e-mail facon@po.jaring.my for more details.

(END)