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End to 'outdated' Rakan Muda programmes

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Outdated or unappealing Rakan Muda programmes will be cancelled from next year.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said today the ministry would re-assess the effectiveness of each Rakan Muda programme from next year on to ensure that they meet youth aspirations.

This is among the drastic approaches taken by the ministry to ensure that the Rakan Muda programmes remain relevant to the young.

Hishammuddin said the ministry would from now on fund fresh and contemporary ideas and activities encompassing every sphere of youth interest such as sports, music, art, volunteerism or new technologies.

The assessment, he said, would be based on the feedback by the youths themselves.

"What needs to be evaluated is the delivery of the concept and effectiveness of the programmes carried out under the Rakan Muda banner.

"The move is necessary to keep up with rapid changes affecting the youths.

"We are widening the ministry's doors for youths themselves to step forward with their own proposals.

"Although it would be unrealistic to have a high expectations of the new Rakan Muda programmes, we are quite positive of the outcome.

We want to revive the lacklustre image of the programmes in the eyes of the public."

Hishammuddin said this during the soft launch of the new image of the Rakan Muda programme.

Hishammuddin said currently the ministry had included extreme and motor sports in the latest range of Rakan Muda activities.

At the same time, he said, the ministry had identified five approaches to inject changes into the Rakan Muda programmes.

They are: emphasising the spirit of volunteerism; genuine partnership between the private and public sectors; varieties in the activities to be implemented at the grassroots level; injecting new ideas as proposed by youths and giving recognition and award to the participants.

"The new programmes will have to be nurtured a step at a time, beginning with activities that can be implemented immediately by a cross-section of groups, firms and sponsors who have a natural affinity for working with youths."

Hishammuddin said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was expected to launch the new image of Rakan Muda programmes with the most updated "version" based on inputs and feedbacks received from youths in January.

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