

PM's Dept sees silver lining in brain drain
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The brain drain phenomena is not necessarily a bad thing, according to the Prime Minister's Department.

"The emigration of human capital is not necessarily (a) negative phenomenon but also shows positive potential for a country, especially in attracting the return of skilled Malaysians living abroad and building a business network that can promote Malaysian products and services abroad," it said.

This was the parliamentary written reply by the department to a question by Batu Gajah MP Fong Po Kuan (left) who asked the government for its stand on the World Bank's report titled 'Malaysia Economic Monitor: Brain Drain'.

The report said that Malaysia's brain drain situation is moving at an exponential rate and in time to come, the country would suffer from a severely narrowing skills base.

The written reply said this phenomena was not unique to Malaysia.

"Emigration of human capital is the highest among middle-income countries because there are incentives and the capability for emigration.

"According to the (World Bank) report, the transfer of knowledge from a originating country to a destination country will contribute to developments in the field of science and technology and business networks, further stimulating trade and foreign investment in a country," reads the reply.

Return to Malaysia

The department said that federal government initiative TalentCorp would be focusing its efforts on convincing skilled Malaysians to return to Malaysia and optimise foreign business networks.

It said that TalentCorp will also be analysing issues relating to the Malaysian diaspora and mechanisms which can be used to optimise their specialties.

The department notes that the World Bank report said that the "Malaysia has so far been spared from the detrimental type of brain drain", because stock human capital has not been eroded.

On the report's suggestion that brain drain can be discouraged by increasing productivity and inclusive development policies, the department said that these have already been addressed by the government transformation programme and economic transformation programme.