

2.5mil new jobs by 2010

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Fong: Demand for skilled workers

JOHOR BARU: Some 2.5 million new jobs in various sectors will be created by 2010, thanks to the strong economic growth and increased demand for skilled workers.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Fong Chan Onn said one of the contributing factors was the Government's move to develop the food and agriculture sector.

"Although there is a global increase in the price of oil, the country's economy is also expected to be strong in the manufacturing and service sectors," he said when opening the state-level Job Carnival in Kota Raya here.

Dr Fong said some 500,000 students were expected to leave schools each year and 34%

of the total would further their studies at institutes and vocational training centres.

"That means 330,000 school leavers will join the workforce every year."

He estimated that by 2010, there would be 1.7 million school leavers looking for jobs within the 2.5 million jobs expected to be available.

According to statistics from the Labour Department, some 89,576 individuals including 44,024 graduates had so far registered with the department. "The real unemployment figures may be much higher as this only shows how many are registered with us as of July this year," he said, adding that out of the 3,000 job vacancies in the state, 70% were for graduates.

He said that the ministry was still discussing the proposal to establish Electronic Labour Exchange (ELX) outlets in shopping malls and hoped to finalise details by the end of the year.

Fong revealed that the ministry had been able to place some 9,000 job applicants in the last six months via ELX.

He added that the Job Carnival in Kota Raya was a success, noting that more than 10,000 applicants had come there seeking employment.

He urged employers to cooperate by hiring more disabled workers as only 6,000 disabled workers had been successful in their job applications through the Disabled Placement System (SPOKU) portal in the last five years.