

Study on manpower needs of new economy

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PUTRAJAYA: The Economic Planning Unit will undertake a study on the manpower needs of Malaysia's growing and changing economy.

The study, to be completed in about six months, will determine the number and types of jobs required by the country up to 2020, and the skills needed for them.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the National Advisory Council on Education and Training decided that the current manpower database was outdated.

"The study will include the total number of jobs and skills that are required, taking into account structural changes in the economy. We are moving from being industrial-based to knowledge-based, and as the economy matures, the service sector is also going to grow bigger," Najib said at a press conference after chairing the council's first meeting yesterday.

"The study will ensure that manpower planning is more attuned to the needs of the new economy and our future."

The service sector contributes 58 per cent of gross domestic product, in tandem with changing lifestyles and demands of the population.

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*Datuk Seri Najib Razak
Deputy Prime Minister*



Najib said this could be seen in the area of medicine, which is moving beyond curative approaches to prevention and the "wellness" concept.

"Now people are not only talking about just prevention but also wellness which is becoming a popular requirement of the population."

The study would not include consideration of a minimum wage for the private sector, he added.

Two other decisions the council

made were on:

- Re-evaluating the incentives under the National Dual Training System, an apprenticeship programme run by the Human Resources Ministry and participating private-sector companies. The council felt that the programme's poor response was due to unattractive incentives.

- Reviving the National Skills Development Fund with a RM130 million allocation from the government. The fund was set up in

2004 by the same ministry to train Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia holders in new skills.

The allocation will cover training for 10,000 school-leavers.

Other members of the advisory council include ministers and officials from the Education, Higher Education and Human Resources ministries, the EPU and the Prime Minister's Department.

Najib said the council was established to ensure better co-ordination among ministries and agencies involved in education and human resource training.

To questions about Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim's withdrawal from the contest for the Commonwealth secretary-general's post, Najib said he would discuss with the prime minister the possibility of nominating another candidate.

On the new directive announced by Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop that all government departments and agencies were not allowed to use the Credit Tip-Off Services (CTOS) for references, Najib said they had to abide by it.

He said banks, through the Association of Banks Malaysia, had decided to use CTOS as long as consent from loan applicants was obtained, but government departments should abide by the directive.