

DATE: 7/12/2010

We're open for business



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak unveiling Talent Corporation Malaysia's policy initiatives at a meeting in Putrajaya yesterday. — NST picture by Afendi Mohamed

By Farrah Naz Karim
farrah@nst.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: To attract and retain talents, Malaysia yesterday unveiled new policy initiatives to address its need for world-class human capital pivotal to its economic transformation plan.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said the government had given the nod to Public Service Department scholars to serve their bond outside the civil service by joining private sector corporations and government-linked companies.

This privilege will be extended mainly to those involved in the 12 New Key Economic Areas and other strategic areas, such as biotechnology, information and communication technology and aerospace.

"We recognise that there are many ways to contribute and we are creating opportunities for scholars to do so," he said.

"They must be able to contribute to

the well-being of the country, its economic growth and the attainment of the government transformation programme."

PSD will issue the guidelines soon.

Speaking at the launch of Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad at his office here yesterday, Najib also announced the introduction of the "resident pass", a document offered to highly qualified expatriates wishing to reside and work in the country.

To be issued latest by April 1, the pass will accord, not only to holders but also their spouses, long-term rights to live and work here without being tied to an employer.

Malaysian diaspora and their offspring, who no longer hold Malaysian citizenship, also qualify for the pass.

This is one way of allowing them to maintain links with the country.

Earlier, Najib said Malaysia was open for business to the global community, especially talent.

It welcomed highly skilled foreign

talent who were able to work with the country in driving its economic transformation, he said.

It is for that reason, Najib said, that from next year, it would no longer be a requirement to advertise for key expatriate positions.

The cabinet had also approved the relaxation of employment pass conditions where the 10-year limit and mandatory understudy requirement for executive positions had been lifted.

The Immigration Department will receive applications for resident passes latest by April 1.

Najib, who is chairman of Talent Corporation Malaysia, which will begin operations on Jan 1, said the set-up would work with relevant agencies to coordinate the policies announced.

It would also act as an intermediary and engage the private sector as well as GLCs to facilitate talent matching to woo back and retain Malaysians, he said.

He said about 700,000 Malaysians worked abroad, with most of them in Singapore and Hong Kong.

Talent Corporation would try to locate and engage the overseas talent, he said.

Asked about salary packages that could woo Malaysian talents abroad home, Najib said: "We have to be globally competitive, otherwise people will not want to come back to Malaysia."

The other board members of Talent Corporation are Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop and Datuk Seri Idris Jala as well as Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan.

Johan Mahmood Merican is its chief executive officer.

Najib reiterated that Talent Corporation was not just about bringing back Malaysians but also about retaining talents in the country.

Present was Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.