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'Opt for technical, vocational studies'

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SKUDAI: School leavers should look into pursuing higher education in technical and vocational studies due to their marketability in today's era of globalisation, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister, said both technical and vocational education were now viewed as among the main choices in education, and not a second choice as in the past.

"I encourage more Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia holders to continue their studies in technical and vocational education to add to the high-skill, high-income workforce in the country," he said at the closing of the 10th Higher Education Carnival 2014 at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) here yesterday.

He said the establishment of the Malaysian Technical University Network (MTUN), comprising Universiti Teknologi Melaka, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn and Universiti Malaysia Perlis, was timely.

"The universities offer a host of technical and vocational education at diploma and degree levels."

Besides the technical universities, he said students also had the opportunity to further their studies in polytechnics, community colleges, vocational colleges and public skills training institutes at certificate, advanced certificate, diploma and advanced diploma levels.

"With various institutes offering academic and skills education, access to higher education is open to

more students.

"As a nation gearing toward development and undergoing a transformation, it is essential to ensure that the people are not deprived of education at their own pace and level," said Muhyiddin.

Present were Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, UTM Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Wahid Omar and Education Ministry's secretary-general Datuk Dr Zaini Ujang.

Later, at the opening of the Umno Kota Tinggi division meeting, Muhyiddin challenged Umno divisions to come up with a "wow factor" to change the people's perception of the party.

The Umno deputy president said a RM10,000 reward awaited the division with the best idea.

He said as the people's expectations were getting higher, they would vent their frustrations over things they were unhappy about via the social media.

He said a committee would be set up at the Umno supreme council level to evaluate the ideas and select the one with the wow factor.

"Start thinking now. Your ideas will add value to the government's policies and efforts," he said.

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